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Estonian Art

The Paint Issue

Kris Lemsalu

Edith Karlson

Kristi Kongi

Alexei Gordin

Elnara Taidre

Irene Campolmi

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Jaanus Samma

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Estonian Art

The Paint Issue

This issue of Estonian Art focuses on paint as a medium.

Painting, painters and the painterly have long been acknowledged as the backbone of art. From cliché to archetype, the medium has come in and out of fashion, but has recently experienced a revival with young artists that are keen to hone their skills and add something new to such an ancient conversation.

The paint-themed issue is inspired by internationally acclaimed artist **Kris Lemsalu** who will represent Estonia at the 58th Venice Biennale with FUNTAIN. Kris Lemsalu is not a painter, per se – but uses colour with painterly sensibilities in sculptures, installations, performances, fashion and on herself.

To further the conversation on contemporary painting, this issue of Estonian Art showcases two visual essays by contemporary painters: *A Visual Essay on Today's Colours* by **Kristi Kongi**, and *Stories from Behind the Red Dot* by **Alexei Gordin**.

Irene Campolmi writes about Kris Lemsalu's practice in *Things Yet To Come*. In *Past Kris in Future Kris*, **Edith Karlson** presents the genesis of an artist, with a visual essay sources from the childhood archives of Kris Lemsalu's parents. **Elnara Taidre** guides us through the works of ten painters from Estonia that represent the last 100 years in *Ten Estonian Painters in Dialogue with Metaphysics (of Painting)*.

Artist **Brian House** shares his experience as an artist in residence at Maajaam, in *Keeping Time at Maajaam*. **Katrin Kivimaa** interviews **Kirke Kangro** about her monumental work in *A Long Awaited Memorial*. Art critic **Antti Tapio Kiuru** talks with artist **Jaanus Samma** in *Body Talk*. **Lars-Erik Hjertström Lappalainen** reflects on the exhibition *Stories of Belonging* at Tartu Art Museum in *Closeness to the Everyday*.

In design, **Stefan Žarić** juxtaposes Estonian and Serbian fashion designers in *Ones to Watch: Estonia and Serbia's Young Fashion Designers*. **Nithikul Nimkulrat** highlights exciting new talent in *Three Estonian Designers* and Estonia-based artist **Hansel Tai** walks us through his practice in *Sexting You With All My Heart*.

In architecture **Gregor Taul** contemplates the new Estonian Academy of Arts building in *Architecture of Paradox*. **Tüüne-Kristin Vaikla** interviews the architects of the Arvo Pärt Centre in *The Hidden Landmark*. **Ann Mirjam Vaikla** writes about her work at the Narva Art Residency in *Space and Time Machine*.

In books, **Triin Ojari**, the Director of the Museum of Estonian Architecture shares her *Top Ten Books*.

Irene Campolmi (b. 1987) is a curator and a researcher. Her curatorial and research focuses on various performative endeavours that think through postcolonial, queer and feminist theories.

The first time I met Kris Lemsalu, she was lying under a giant polychrome tortoise shield in the Temnikova & Kasela booth during the Frieze Art Fair in 2015. At first, she could have looked squished under the turtle ceramic armor. However, her silent, resilient and almost imperceptible movements denoted she was okay seeking protection under the reptilian shelter and being isolated from the frenzied crowd of artists, gallerists, curators, and collectors. All of whom were spinning around the Frieze's isles to-do that meeting, to meet that collector, pass-by that booth, or attend that performance.

Whole Alone, 2015. Photos: Piible Kolka



**Things
Yet to Come**



Whole Alone, 2015. Photos: Piible Kolka

During the 36 hours in which the fair was open to the public, she lay still and alone – as the title of the piece says “Whole Alone” – spreading the feeling that something was about to happen. Like an absent presence, an embodied spirit inhabiting the spaces of the art fair, as a prophet would do in the areas of a conflict zone, Kris was infusing her mystic oracles into its over excited atmosphere and reminding to people that something has always yet to come. Usually, galleries recommend that artists who have a solo booth presentation attend the art fair to get connected with their potential collectors. Lemsalu was present, but as the embodiment of her work. It was not the first time that she performed with one of her sculptures to bring it to a new stage of existence, playing a sort of initiation ritual. But the artist’s presence inside her work would also simultaneously increase the market value of her installation, and question the contradictory nature of the art market: how could a collector or an institution acquire an installation comprising of the artist lying under a ceramic turtle shield surrounded by piles of egg boxes filled with fresh eggs?

Certainly inherited, from the visual language of one of her life mentors and friends – the artist Sarah Lucas, the organic element of the egg, which has been quite a recurrent feature in Kris Lemsalu’s work, and it has accompanied most of her performances as a *leitmotif*. In one of the earliest performances from 2010 called *The Birth of Venus*, Kris dressed up in a costume that recalled the exaggerate abdomen, hips, breast, thighs and vulva of Neolithic goddesses, like the *Venus of Willendorf* or the *Venus of Hohlefels*. Lying down on the floor, the artist-Venus would inflate a big white balloon through an electric pump located in the lower hip of her costume until the balloon would explode. The bladder symbolised the egg, the emblem of potential life and its explosion recalled the glimpse in which life begins (but also ends): with a bang, a cry, a scream, which materialises in a fraction of seconds something that is about to come. In a fraction of seconds, a sperm fertilises an egg, a baby inhales their first breath, a car crashes, a body exhales for the last time. In between these fractions of seconds, we live, meltdown, meet people, make noise, escape life, come back, change the shape and nature of our bodies, and create stories to order the chaotic mess in which our matter puts itself together in the world.



The Venice Biennial crowd will come across this weird, convoluted mess of organic and inorganic matter by navigating the Estonian pavilion. The title of the show *Birth V* pays homage to the city of Venice as a Venus, or rather, as a mother goddess: aged, beautiful, fascinating, mystic, wise, and wild as a mythological figure, who nevertheless receives her charm from being an island, detached from the stability of the mainland. Every year, from her wet and fraught humid streets, she gives birth to another carnival of life, creating a stage for new plays and stories to take form and for characters, roles, and horrors as well as fairytales to come into being. *Birth V* is a ritual-exhibition, where the artist and her entourage of *weirdos* – musicians, friends, artists, curators, and people who have meant in the artist’s life – will be screaming and crying prophecies, altering explosive moments with still quietness. The public is invited to join the exhibition as if it were a carnival, a magic ritual celebrating birth and life, and yet still a masquerade where death camouflages and silently hides behind moments of joy and exuberance.



Birth of Venus. 2010

Birth V will be a party, a masquerade ball, and a celebration of life to keep death waiting a little bit more. Populated by ghosts, impalpable presences, memories, friends who were and friends who will be, sculptures of giant vulvas, pools of water, women mannequins, and other totems fraught with feminist characteristics, the artist and her works will perform and inhabit new corporealities throughout the duration of the exhibition. Corporeality designates multiple modes of en fleshed political and desiring existences.

As a term, it replaces and critiques the problematic ontological ambivalence contained in the expression 'the body'. This time, the artist will dress in the role of the muse rather than that of the shaman and the show-woman. She and her extended artistic family will make a singularly glorious mess in the warehouse hosting the pavilion. Music will breathe a new agency into human bodies and inorganic sculptures.

Lemsalu's ability to inhabit less recognised and recognisable identities through her performances has assigned her the reputation of a person with an eccentric and extravagant personality. However, her identity play is part of years of artistic search on the self, far away from the narcissistic social-media instinct that brings people to self-consciously perform desired or sought after personalities. Lemsalu's work is an imperceptible signal sent out in a black void to check if anyone responds. Sometimes, only ghosts are able to capture those signs.



3 of Life. 2017. Photo: Tatjana Pieters



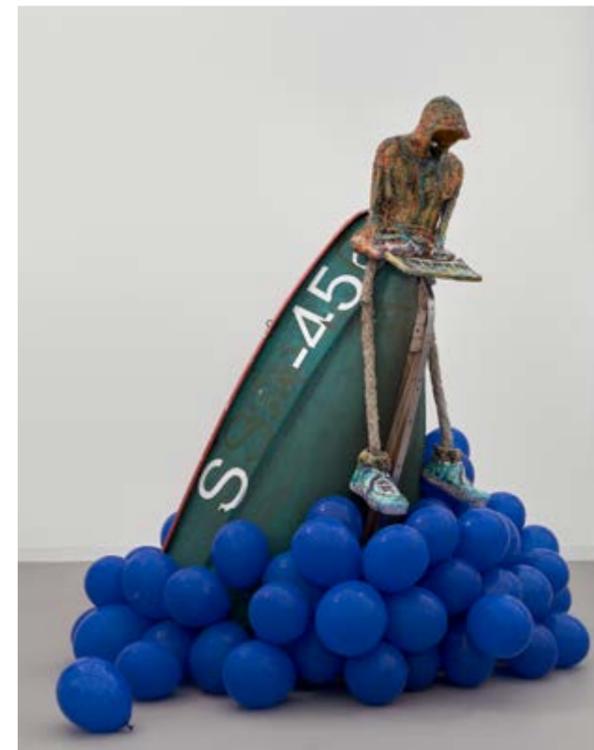
In Heaven Everything is Fine. 2017

In Heaven Everything is Fine, a performance curated by the David Robert Art Foundation in 2017 and staged in an old-fashioned Edwardian theatre adorned with red velvet and golden stucco decorations, a piece of music played by Glasser, one of her musician collaborators, resounds in the dense darkness. Suddenly, a follow-spot light begins tracing a trajectory that goes from the stalls area up to one of the small balconies where Kris Lemsalu appears as a punk Madonna, wearing a white vest with feathers and her characteristic thick black eyebrows. She hesitantly places herself at the centre the light, and gently starts singing a melody that carries the titles of the performance "In Heaven Everything is Fine". By the time the audience begins repeating the melody of the song, four men with a familiar look join her on the stage. In a few seconds, everyone recognises the doppelgangers of David Bowie, Leonard Cohen, Prince, and George Michael. They are evidently actors playing the part, but their little apparition in the vest of 'archangels' feels gentle and good. Through the performance-ritual, Lemsalu accepts the game of life, where death is constantly present but has, yet, to come. She seems to say that she is "fine with [the] afterlife" echoed by the title of one of her early works.

Her artistic practice consists of a series of transitory amalgamations of political, somatic, sexual, and aesthetic counter-natural inventions that manifest through various corporealities. Kris Lemsalu's imagery brings



Fine with afterlife. 2015. Photo: Roman Maerz and KAI10 | Arthena Foundation



So Let Us Melt. 2017. Photo: Robert Glowacki



Kris Lemsalu in collaboration with Kyp Malone, Going Going, 2017, for Performa 17. Photo: Paula Court

together secularity and religion, mythology and history, horror facts and fairytales, sorrow and joy; creating installations, objects and (mostly) situations in which life and death are simultaneously perceived and experienced, creating suspended, weird conditions in which 'things' happen but are yet to come.

Part Kris in Feature Kris

First I want everyone to know that Kris has no idea what I am going to show you here! And for the second I have to ~~be~~ give credits to Kris's parents who have made great work of documenting every step of their daughter. There are numerous albums filled with photos of dressed up Kris, taken just before going out. Oh boy, how I love these albums. I love them because they are entertaining but also because it gives this unique opportunity to track down ~~her love~~ the roots of her ~~love~~ love for transformation and understand that it has always been part of her. I really would not be surprised if she was not born naked but all ready in full costume and a grin on her face 😊

With the best
Edith

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W.B.
Kastanm.

Kartis.



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Stam's
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Sto's kuld-
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Mle paruras
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Paikis
Kestimmis.

Jsa taas
Antya.



Enne
Mierut

Pris.

Alas ja start.



Keri's
õhtusöök!



Keri's lahel
Pula le sõbr
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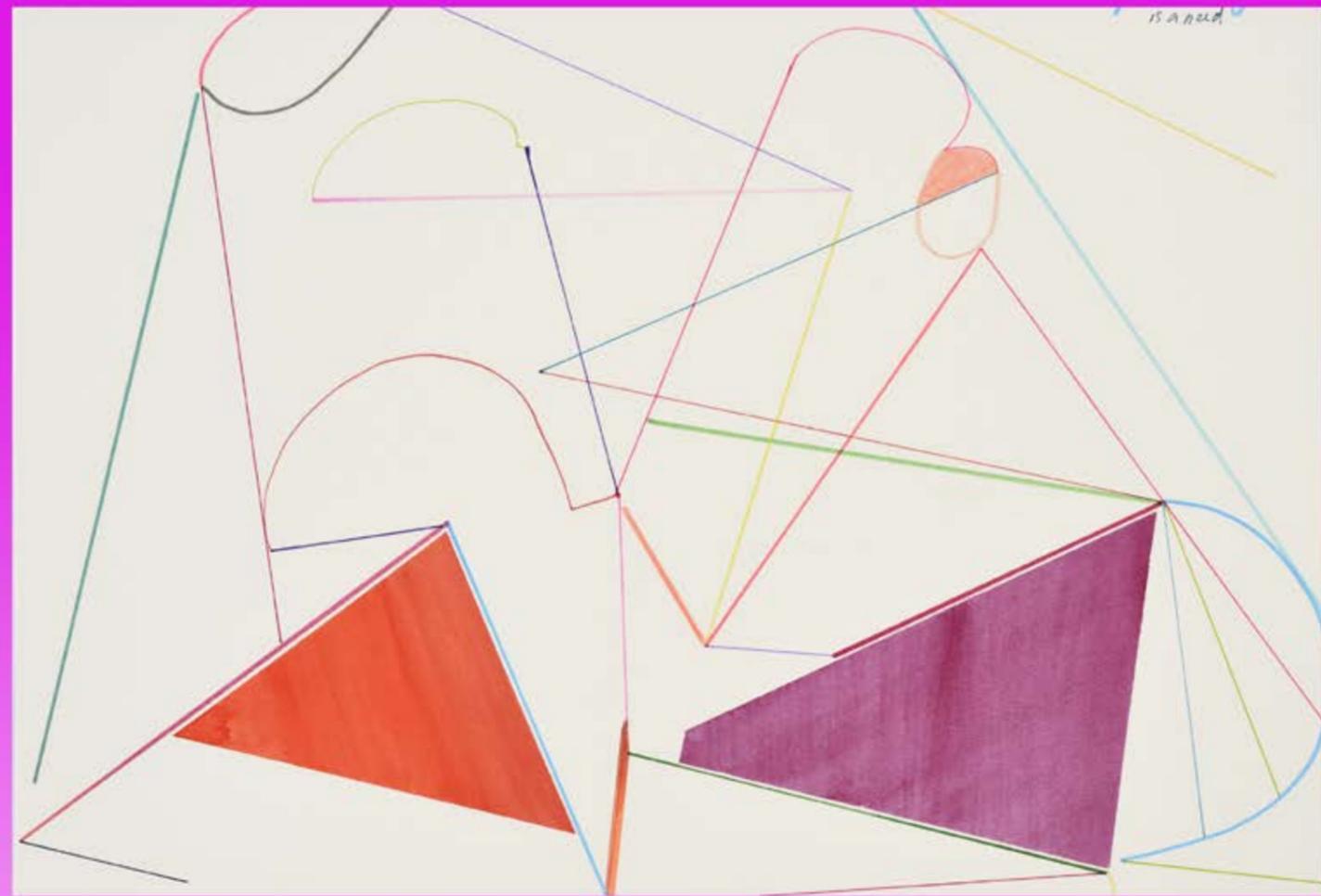






Edith Karlson (b. 1983) is an artist who has been educated in sculpture and Kris's long-time friend.

"A VISUAL ESSAY ON TODAY'S COLOURS"
KRISTI KONGI
2019



transparency is a need



How do you see this colour as violet black



"Mountain top with turquoise background"
Oil on canvas
2019



this land - cadmium-orange, yellow, bright pink



This moving magenta makes me cry







Alexei Gordim (b. 1989) works mainly with painting and video. He is always in search of controversial situations in the intersection of art practice, individuality, and capitalism. Alexei's absurd and grotesque works question market and political influences on the art world and turn well established concepts inside out.

Ten Estonian Painters in Dialogue with Metaphysics (of Painting)

Elnara Taidre

Elnara Taidre (b. 1983) is an art historian, critic and curator. She works as the keeper of the Collection of Prints and Drawings at the Art Museum of Estonia.

It is not easy to pick only ten names in Estonian painting, despite the fact that the local, national artistic school is relatively young: it's not much older than the Estonian Republic itself, which celebrated its 100th anniversary last year. Considering criteria such as colour and other "painterly" qualities, psychologism, conceptuality, etc., I accepted the fact that my selection will inevitably be subjective and decided to focus on works that involve a certain metaphysical dimension.



Kristjan Raud. Resting from the Journey (Flight to Egypt). Ca 1905. Tempera on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia

It is not that typical for Estonian paintings, and the history of local metaphysical art is rather imaginary, yet it includes some of the best examples to form a beautiful continuity lasting more than a century. Most of the artworks reproduced here belong to the collection of the Art Museum of Estonia, which in turn has its centennial this year.

Kristjan Raud (1865 – 1943) was one of the founders of Estonian artistic tradition at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Having received academic art training in Saint Petersburg and tasted the more liberal atmosphere of Munich, he chose the third path that lies between classical ideals and Modernist innovations. Thus, he built up his original visual language inspired from Estonian folk art and legends. In his paintings and chalk drawings, human figures are reminiscent of archaic wooden sculptures. Here, nature acts like an independent character, embracing both the human depicted and the viewer with the suggestive depths of its green meadows and blue skies.



Kristjan Raud. Sacrifice. 1935. Tempera on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia

Aleksander Krims (1893 – 1947) didn't use bright colours in his paintings, generally speaking. He worked with the delicate spectrum of pastel halftones, which sometimes were even close to monochromy. Although Krims had connections with the Group of Estonian Artists, who were renowned for their Avant-garde experimentations with geometric art, his elegantly stylized figurative works relate more to the aesthetics of international Art Déco and even Italian *pittura metafisica*. Along with his works, agents of metaphysic painting such as dream-like empty space, bold surfaces and evocative light entered Estonian art.



Aleksander Krims. Summer. 1937. Oil on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia



Aleksander Krims. Houses and Towers. 1930. Oil on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia



Olav Maran. Autumn in Lilleküla. 1978. Oil on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia



Andres Tolts. Pärnu Road. 1974. Oil on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia



Olav Maran. Still-Life with Pumpkin and Onions. 1986. Oil on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia

Olav Maran (1933) was one of the first artists who introduced abstract and surrealist imagery to Estonian art in the 1960s. In the context of the Soviet regime, which cultivated realist art canon as the declarer its ideology, this was a radical gesture of modernisation. However, in the 1970s, after the Prague Spring crushed the hopes for liberalization of Soviet society, Maran abolished his experimentations and focused on tackling eternal values with the means of somewhat timeless realism. Maran developed a system of depiction that seems almost religious, as the tranquil, enlightened harmony of everyday objects and moments reveals the presence of a higher reality.



Andres Tolts. A Seal and a House Plant. 1984. Oil on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia

Andres Tolts (1949 – 2014) belongs to the generation who entered the Estonian art scene at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s and of those who received education in design or architecture, which left a certain impact on their art practice. The design background of Tolts could have influenced, perhaps, his interest in everyday environments and materials. However, from them he has created his own system of symbols, where the everyday is transformed into the ordered space and metaphysics of materials. Here, space becomes a hieroglyph, a visual sign filled with hidden meaning.



Mari Kurismaa. Geometric Landscape. 1988. Oil on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia

Mari Kurismaa (1956) is a well-known interior architect, but also exhibition designer, who is known for her work both with historical as well as with contemporary artworks and spaces. Nevertheless, in the 1980s and 1990s she mostly dedicated herself to painting. In her compositions, geometric space is no mere abstraction, but a separate world, which lives according to its own mysterious laws.

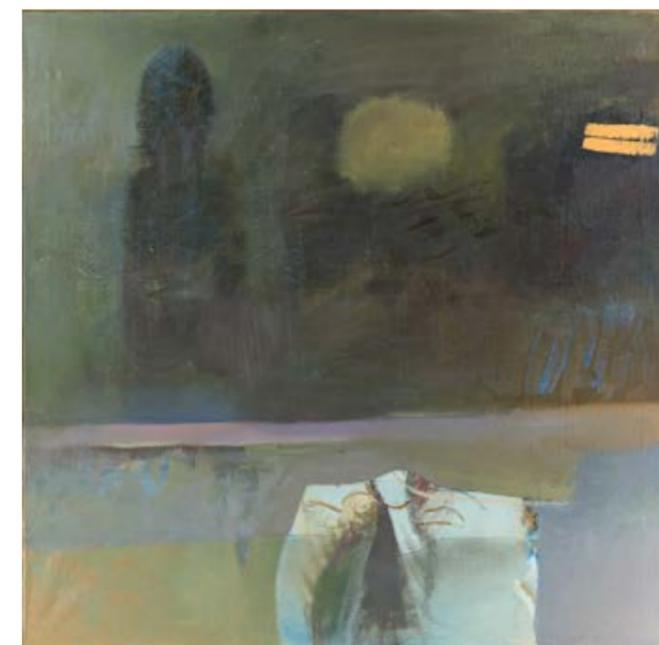


Mari Kurismaa. In Silence. 1988. Oil on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia



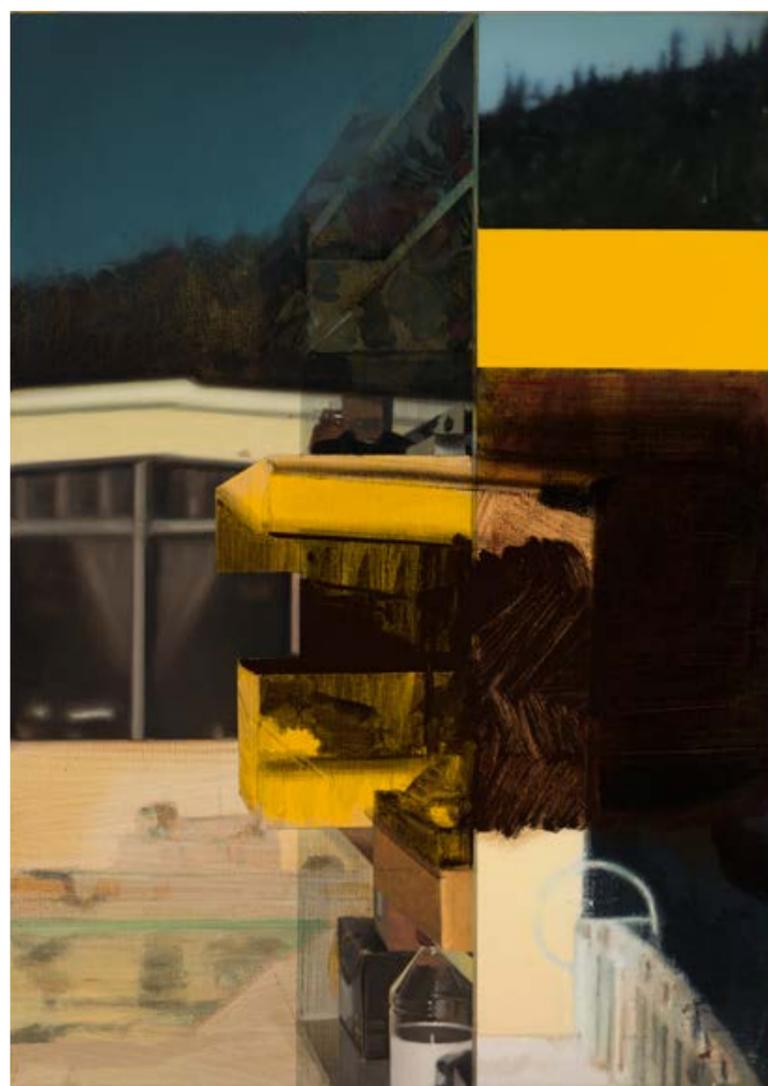
Imat Suumann. Night Ammonia. 2004. Oil on canvas. Tartu Art Museum

Imat Suumann (1964) is the only artist in this selection who represents the Tartu school of painting. His works are a good example of the paintings associated with the Art School Pallas. Founded in 1919, Pallas became a symbol of Estonian art education, its traditions were developed even after closing by Soviet authorities and later, when the Painting Department of the Tartu University was opened, in 1988. The Tartu school is strong in painting as such, where colour, brushwork and textures are subjects and a quest in themselves. Suumann's painting system, elaborated on from the end of the 1980s, have a subtle, even ascetic colour scheme. His observations of mundane moments become a poetic witness of existence.

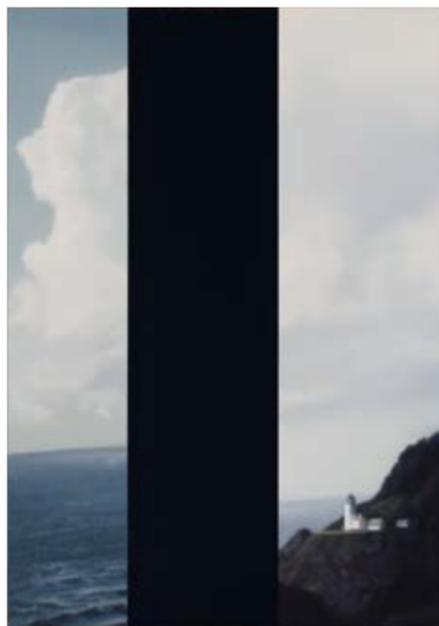


Imat Suumann. Forming the Emptiness. 1993. Oil on canvas. Tartu Art Museum

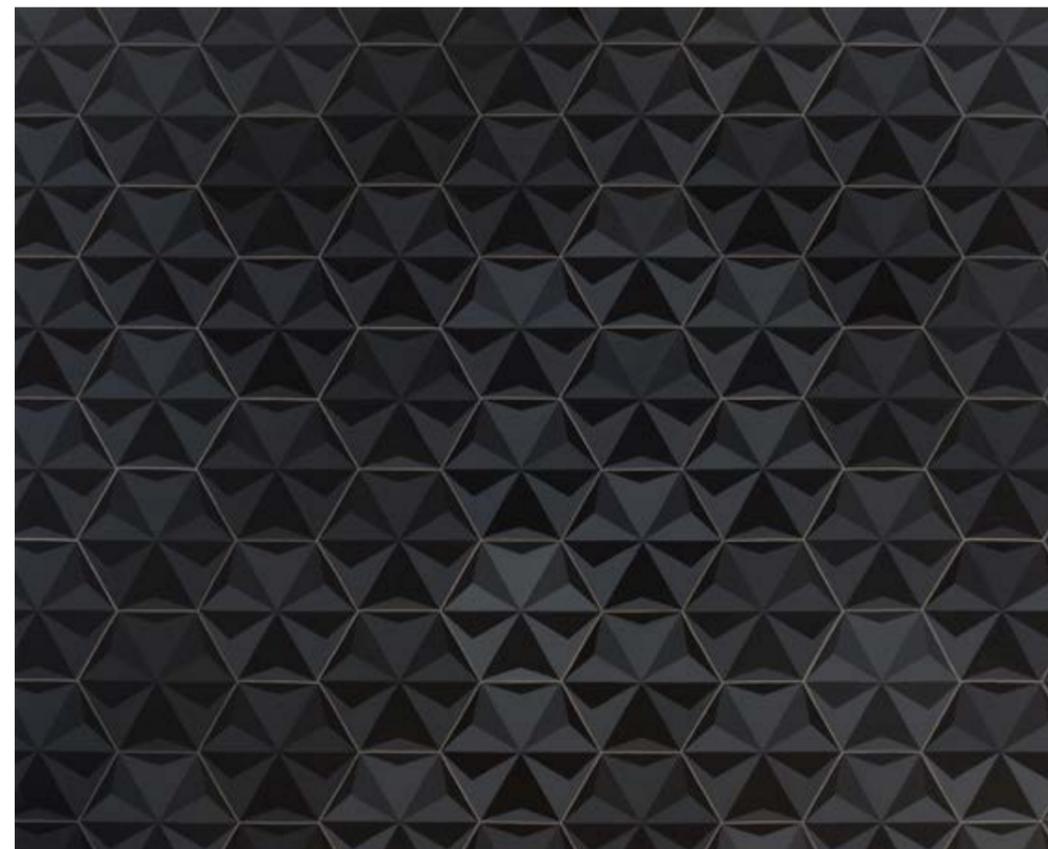
Tõnis Saadoja (1981) brought new energies into the Estonian art scene in the 2000s as an author of hyperrealist paintings. However, in his highly realistic and detailed works, visual form is always subject to conception. Masterful painterly skills are for Saadoja a means in his search for the answers to the question: can painting as a medium and a sign system contribute relevantly in contemporary art processes, and if yes, in what way? Saadoja is a very rational author, yet his painterly dissections of fragments of reality and memories sometimes remind one of an alchemical dialogue with metaphysics of painting as such.



Tõnis Saadoja. Cut Image II. 2017. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia



Tõnis Saadoja. Cut Image V. 2017. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Art Museum of Estonia



Sirja-Liisa Eelma. Emptying field of meaning: L9. 2016. Oil on canvas. Private collection

Sirja-Liisa Eelma (1973) engages with the question: what role can the art of painting play in a world overfilled with all sorts of visual images, both material and digital? As a possible solution to the problem the artist suggests a kind of visual fasting: a paradox of elaborate and time-consuming work with a very small set of images and colours. In her minimalist monochrome compositions Eelma creates rather few new bits of visual information, which is yet quite enough to concentrate on – taking a pause from the everyday informational flood and cleaning one's mind. Eelma's works constitute meditations, both for the author painting and the viewer examining them.



Sirja-Liisa Eelma. Sandwiches around the Clock. 2017. Painting installation. Private collection

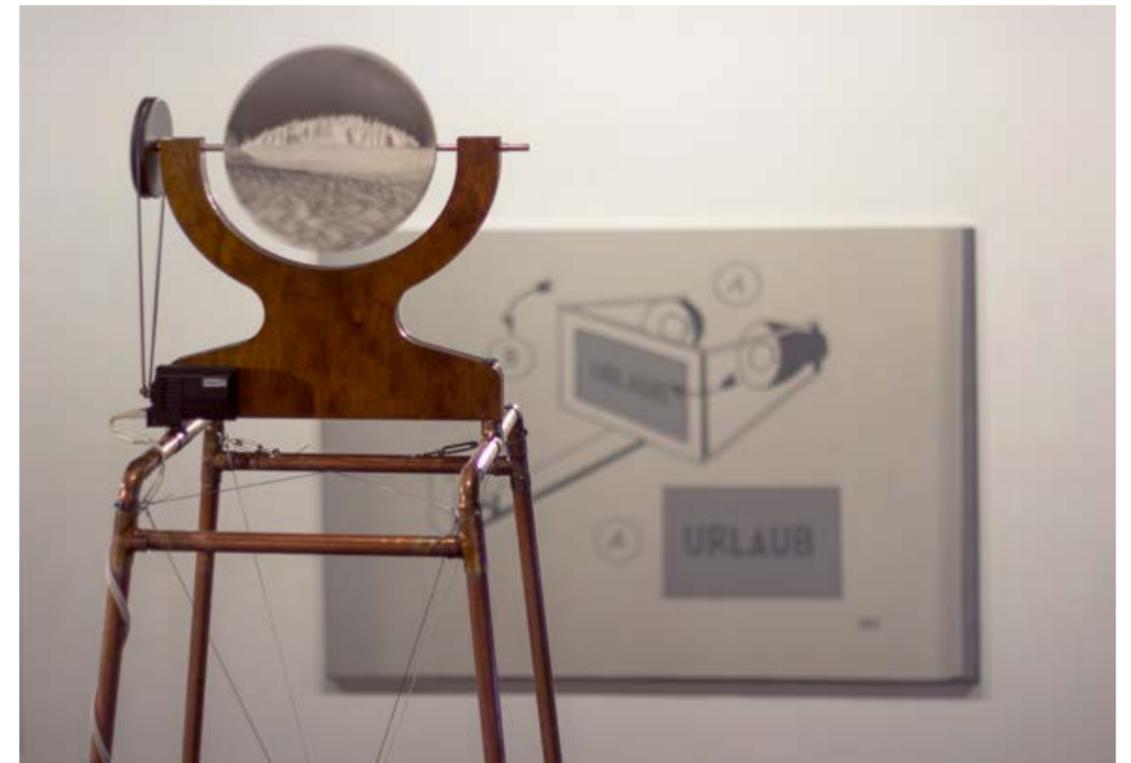


Alice Kask. Untitled. 2018. Oil on canvas. Private collection

Alice Kask (1976) works most often represent human bodies in empty space. As a rule, she never depicts the human body consistently: if some parts are painted with detailed precision, others remain an abstract shape. It is difficult to say whether these personages come into being, materialising and acclaiming their will from the void, or if they lose their flesh, dissolving into the empty surface of canvas. Possibly, it can be read in the both ways, symbolising the uneasy cycle of the artistic process and human life in general: being lonely and unarmed in one's struggle with existence.



Alice Kask. Untitled. 2018. Oil on canvas. Private collection



Holger Loodus. Mountain in Mist. 2016. Kinetic installation. Private collection

Holger Loodus (1970) often combines painting with other media in order to develop uncanny narratives. Side by side with the hyperrealist compositions he displays cryptic designs and witty machines for creating images or even new ways of seeing.

Works by Loodus are quite often reminiscent of science fiction, recalling utopia and dystopia simultaneously. In their timeless dimension they can depict both the future and the past – or rather the present in an alternative history of humankind.



Holger Loodus. The Steam. 2019. Oil on canvas. Private collection



Keeping Time at MAAJAAM

Brian House

Brian House (b. 1979) is an artist who investigates more-than-human temporalities. His work has been exhibited at MoMA (New York), MOCA (Los Angeles), ZKM, and Ars Electronica, among others. He holds a PhD in computer music from Brown University and lives in Brooklyn, New York.
www.brianhouse.net

It was past the dinner hour already. But I didn't regret my choice to take the long way back as the lingering sunset cast everything with a rare and beautiful light. It felt that I was walking through a sane world, one that luxuriated in the slow and cyclical time that we're all born into but from which we so easily become estranged in an urban and online life. The dirt path wound through hills and fields, passed timeless farmhouses festooned with beehives or barns, and ducked into woods that were not quite wild but filled with mysteries nonetheless.

I couldn't help the thought that this view would have been identical hundreds of years prior. And while I'm well aware that European history is far from idyllic, just having this basic contact with the land reminded me of what's at stake when we engineer time and space to work differently.

Maajaam, which translates from Estonian as "Earth Station," is the home and studio of Timo Toots, as well as where he hosts an annual residency for other artists working with technology. On the one hand, the whole enterprise reflects an improvisatory exuberance that mirrors the man, such as when he began resurfacing the driveway an hour before the culminating *Wild Bits* exhibition opening – and finished with time to undertake several more impossible tasks. Timo's relentless pulse is something like a social media feed that just keeps going. But at the same time, the lived nature of the Estonian countryside is continually erupting into the middle of things, whether that's a sudden downpour, an underfoot child, fresh black bread, storks calling across the valley, a collective vegetarian meal, a swarm of mosquitos, a spontaneous trip to the lake for a swim, or a crew passing out together on mattresses in the living room. And it's certainly the only place where I've gone directly from using a digital laser cutter to chatting with a group of naked people sweating in an ancient smoke sauna.

I don't mean to say that there is a contrast at Maajaam between old and new, digital and physical, fast and slow. Instead, that dichotomy is what is missing. It is always a false premise to suggest that the digital is immaterial, or futuristic, when, in fact, the materiality of our technologies has defined the structure of society for all of human history. What many of us now suffer from is an alienation from this reality, and the premise of Maajaam is therefore



not at all quaint, but rather essential. Where else, for example, would visitors be prompted to have a conversation about artificial intelligence while dangling their feet into the water from a custom built raft in the middle of a pond? What might at first seem absurd is actually a fitting vantage point from which to consider technologies that will have a pervasive impact on the world, as opposed to environments that feel "techy" – otherwise, there's a lot that is missing from the conversation. To get tech advice from an elderly mole or to see a precise hole cut into the facade of a forest, are deceptively critical positions in which the material effects of abstraction are not dismissed.

My own practice is concerned with the rhythm of computers, which has everything to do with their physicality. Take the concept of "random access" in computer science – the logic that says any piece of information should be accessible roughly the same amount of time. This is different than, say, a cassette tape, which must fast-forward or rewind linearly. With hard disks, computer memory, and even the internet itself, nothing is (perceptibly) closer than anything else,



which imparts a sense of arbitrariness to the digital systems we use every day. Behind the scenes, however, engineering both small (the read head of a disk) and huge (fiber optic cables spanning the globe) re-organise physical spaces to make such a flattening of time possible. But this is not how the human body relates to geography – walking is a matter of a contingent sequence. No matter how we try to index space, moving "matters," and because of that, a place like the farm at Maajaam is assembled relationally, as lived. Everyday facilities are clustered close together according to use: kitchen, community table, toilet (the sauna is maybe a little further away).

But what if we lived according to random access? Of course, in many ways we already do, such as every time we check email on our phones, collapsing all kinds of diverse relationships into a homogenous form. For my work at Maajaam, however, I tried to find out what it would be like if our movement through space itself also functioned in this way. So I organised all aspects of my daily life such that moving between any two sites of activity – e.g., from the loft of the barn where I slept to the porch of the main house – would take the same amount of time. To set this up, I used a stopwatch (vintage, natch) and made multiple timed walks between each pair of locations. I discovered that it's not just a matter of distance, as walking uphill is slower than downhill, for example, or there might be a tricky door to open along the way that affects the time. Once I had these timings, I built a reference tool, a circular chart that I made out of wood (using a laser cutter in the workshop). This tool let me calculate alternative routes between locations so that moving from the porch to the communal table—normally a negligible walk—would first take me around the property and therefore equal the full three minutes that it would also take to walk from the driveway down to the creek.

For the final couple days at Maajaam I lived in this way. On the one hand, it elicited the physical and social tensions when human-centered ways of living meet



machinic ones. My social interactions, for instance, became asynchronous. I could no longer stroll together with someone from the workshop to the hammock, or change my mind midway. It felt restricting, or even isolating, just as the digital can be. But on the other hand, my exercise also forced me to take more time, and in so doing, to notice in greater detail what of the earth was present along my path. If there is a thesis to this piece, it is that we should pay more attention to the material contingencies behind the kind of arbitrary access our digital devices make possible.

To run such experiments with time requires a rare kind of residency. I'm thankful for how Timo, along with co-organisers Marie Kliiman, Kadri Lind, and Taavi Suisalu, made room for this kind of possibility in the *Wild Bits* programme, and how they intuitively cultivated serendipity. On exhibition day, buses arriving from Tallinn and Riga brought visitors to Maajaam. The slow chaos that resulted was far richer than if polished work had been shipped off to white galleries in the urban centres. The latter is ultimately a capitalist enterprise, but Maajaam accomplishes something more timely. Perhaps it's that as much as any artwork, the communal experience of place was on display at the exhibition. This in itself offers a critical and much needed perspective on technology and what it is to make art in our our time.





Katrin Kivimaa

A Long-Awaited Memorial

Katrin Kivimaa (b. 1969) is an art historian, cultural critic and translator, currently working as the senior researcher in the Institute of Art History and Visual Culture at the Estonian Academy of Arts. Her main areas of research include feminist art history, Estonian modern and contemporary art, nationalism and art, feminist curating, and the representation of women in art and visual culture.

A conversation with Kirke Kangro, the designer of the Memorial to the Victims of Communism. “And thousands fall along the way, still a thousand others make it home ...”



Katrin Kivimaa: The Memorial to the Victims of Communism was structured as a symbolic narrative: a visitor takes a journey down a passage framed by black walls, reaching a home garden where the central symbols are apple trees and bees. When you were invited to work with the sculptural elements of the moment, these two symbolic spaces – a passage and an apple garden – were already in place, while the bee motif was your original input to the project. The bees then led to the inclusion of verses by Paul-Erik Rummo and Juhan Liiv, which convey the memorial’s message about a small community – a bee colony, or bee family as we say in Estonian, many members of which perished in the historical turmoil while others made it safely back home. Tell us about how you came up with the bee motif.

Kirke Kangro: I proposed the sculptural idea for the memorial based largely on what the architects already had. The large-scale features of the Journey and Home Garden were in themselves so sculptural and powerful – it seemed to me that I could only add something, the form of which couldn’t compete with the architectural features. Something with different dimensions can be monumental in some other way. I

was greatly moved by the number of people who had been killed during the occupation and whose names were now to be inscribed on the interior walls of the memorial. A statistical figure like that always seems shockingly banal, yet every individual name opens a fresh wound. Injustice and violence measured in the number of people. The architects’ idea was to create two objects with different personalities – a dark and sorrowful corridor of names, and a bright yard – the green, green grass of home – with apple trees. The project brief also called for some lines of text on the memorial wall in the garden.

My idea was to “translate” the names of the victims on the wall into a brighter, I would say a more *redemptive* form in the apple orchard. I imagined those apple trees in bloom and realised that real, live bees could be the connecting link between the journey and the apple orchard. Bees that somehow managed to arrive, despite the times, despite the fact that a small people have been through hell and back; and despite that the real bees – which a number of Estonian poets have likened to the Estonian nation – are now themselves becoming endangered all over the world.

Juhan Liiv’s lines of verse – which are surely in the consciousness of everyone who is proficient in the Estonian linguistic space – were connected to the idea

of the bees right from the start and I even proposed to the architects the idea of a wall with a big swarm of bees with the words to the Liiv poem “It Flies Toward the Beehive” (*Ta lendab mesipuu poole*), which was also a nod to the fact that his words have always sustained the sense of solidarity needed for resistance. Adding the lines of verse to the wall was not an absolute for me, but the client also had a strong desire to have the Liiv quotation there and Liiv’s poetry was just the perfect fit – incontrovertible like nature, like people who won’t sell out their principles.

Besides Liiv, we also considered using text by Paul-Erik Rummo – I found that in terms of temporal presence, Rummo’s “a swarm flushed from its hive” (*heitunud mesilaspere*) would be very apropos for the monument. Later it was decided that it would be used by the memorial entrance.

The bee motif struck me as a simple yet bold choice. After all, it was a kind of element that doesn’t really bring to mind the ostentatious function of a monumental complex. I was pleased that the architects and client had the confidence to get on board with the idea.

But it wasn’t easy to nail down exactly how the bee motif should be brought to life. I went to the Estonian Museum of Natural History where I was able to delve into their rich archive of bee life and lore. They are small creatures, each one contributing in some way to gathering honey for their hive. I studied the archive data on bees: species names, where the specimens were gathered and in what year. The oldest bee I found was caught in Rõuge in 1956. I imagined how in this period, a naturalist would go out into the meadows to look for bees. There was a bumblebee from 1991, caught in Helsinki – at that time Estonian naturalists could already travel to Finland freely. Thus, the insect archive also reflected a little of our political history. I found one bee myself in 2017 on the ground, near Kalev Stadium. The bees were scanned – the Estonian University of Life Sciences and Amper Engineering helped with this – and printed onto stainless steel at the TalTech materials lab.

Katrin Kivimaa: Each memorial fulfils multiple functions, as a result of which it must also fit into different contexts. The memorial is a bearer of the historical memory of one community (that in the case of Estonia is made up by several ethnic communities that lived together in the interwar Estonian Republic). One of the expressions of collective memory is the state, and official ceremonies – thus, memorials inevitably take part in the process of writing official histories of the present-day nation-state. But, along with that inevitable official function, memorials should also be seen as places for private acts of remembering.

Thanks to my own family history, I am very conscious of why that kind of place for remembering must consider the artistic and aesthetic preferences of different generations and individuals. The memorial was created for all people in Estonia who were repressed by the Soviet regime, of whom ethnic Estonians, the majority of population, made up the biggest part. On one hand, it could be said that the symbols selected, such as the path of sufferings and the dream of returning to the garden of one’s own home, are universally human. However, the motif of the bee and the lines from classic Estonian poetry add a strongly local flavour to it. How did these different functions and meanings influence your creative process?

Kirke Kangro: I joined the team after a competition where the architects asked several sculptors to propose solutions for the sculptural portions of the memorial. If I had been involved with the idea for the memorial right from the beginning, I would have identified differently with the meanings. In that sense, my role was easier, I didn’t have to deal with the whole series of preliminary questions, and so I focused on the artistic synthesis of the symbols. As an artist, I didn’t have to consider the entirety of the complexity and conflicts that could be involved in a memorial – a commission from the government, the expectations of the Estonian Institute of Historical Memory, the weighty responsibility on the artists, and also the people in Estonia who received a completely different account of the history of that period.

I was touched by the opportunity to create a memorial for people who were treated unjustly and for their family members – one that might ease the pain and trauma. I tried to think precisely about the fact that the monument is intended for individuals – it’s about the tragedy of the disappearance and loss of every one of these people. I wanted to forge some kind of link between people of the past and future. In some sense, history can be remembered “correctly” only by each individual, with their individual experience.

It’s also important to consider that a monument is a very important partner in social dialogue and thus it shouldn’t contain elements that incite aggression. Nor should there be a manipulative element in a good monument.

Establishing memorials is certainly an attempt to write history and, through monuments, the nature of the power that shapes public space is exposed. In other words, objects in a public space provide information about the “state of health” of the public political and cultural sphere. It’s usually easy to read bias in monuments. Undoubtedly most monuments

want to tell us “how things were”, and indeed, it’s hard to create a monument that has an open nature and makes people think. At the same time ideologies, for which monuments are one tool for rewriting events and their own operating mechanisms, have to work hard to keep viewers on a specific track. Everyone knows what public works of isolated systems are like and how they are intended to influence viewers. They can be taken seriously only by people who are under great material and mental duress.

The framing in which something is remembered naturally fades over time, in the end it simply becomes a source of information about its era. Monuments that imagine the past heroically, which were used at a specific time to try to create identity and bolster self-consciousness, start seeming hollow or even simple-minded to succeeding generations. The pyramidal monument, designed by Amandus Adamson in the early period of the long saga of Estonia’s Freedom Monument, was to be topped with a representation of the epic hero Kalevipoeg defeating an evil creature, flanked on the sides by Lembitu (pre-Christian Estonian leader) and Johan Laidoner (interwar general) on horseback. This kind of national romanticism makes us chuckle now because it seems naive. Yet back then, we could not have done without it; it sprang from a sincere desire to try to store up cultural power for the future.

Katrin Kivimaa: In the 20th and 21st century, memorials have become important landmarks in public space. Their function as public artworks and architectural monuments is just as important. Some of the first reactions to the Memorial to the Victims of Communism in Tallinn drew a comparison to such well-known works as Peter Eisenman’s Holocaust Memorial in Berlin or Maya Lin’s Vietnam War Veterans Memorial in Washington. What memorials have been influential for you? Did any of them inspire your creative process?

Kirke Kangro: Maya Lin’s memorial with its 58,220 names and understated aesthetics is poignantly moving. Another American artist, Chris Burden, has a work called *The Other Vietnam Memorial* where Vietnamese names are etched into copper plates mounted in a Rolodex-like installation. The artist took 4,000 names from Vietnamese telephone directories and generated 3 million Vietnamese-sounding names that actually belonged to no one. The US didn’t keep records on the Vietnamese killed in the American war and there are no data on their names. The Eisenman memorial is likewise a metaphor of infinite loss, a landscape with a countless number of concrete geometric solids. Besides helping us to remember, they are information carriers that wound us, and continue

to educate and sound a warning to us. When we look at the numbers of those killed, we can only think, over and over again: could that have been me instead?

As I worked on the memorial to the victims of communism, I nevertheless focused solely on Estonian history and didn’t seek inspiration elsewhere. But one way to look at it is that any sort of constant remembering of the numbers of the dead is in itself a memorial: close to 6 million Jewish women, men and children; close to 60,000 young American men; over 20,000 Estonians.

I think it’s very important that such places for remembering losses are given the form of an artwork: art cannot compensate for the losses, but it does reach out and interact on the part of those who had that fate. The wiser and the more advanced the state or entity commissioning the work is, the more freedom it gives professional artists. In an unhealthy society, we see totems designed by rulers or embarrassing works dictated by the funding source.

Katrin Kivimaa: It is not that easy to find examples of Estonian contemporary art that work with, and through, the material of historical trauma of World War II and the Soviet occupation.

One reason for this might be that contemporary art developed here first and foremost as practice dealing predominantly with global issues and as a critical visual analysis of the present. When looking at the debate that sparked around the recent renaming of the Occupation Museum in Tallinn as the Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom (a rebranding that stressed freedom and the future rather than the totalitarian era and historical suffering), it became evident that many – especially amongst the younger generation – tend to regard working with historical trauma as something that reinforces the view of Estonians merely as victims of colonisation and historical aggression. Instead they want to promote a different view of the country – a successful, forward-looking IT-nation. What do you think are the reasons that, unlike Estonian contemporary cinema or literature, visual art has not been so interested in addressing the wartime and post-war experience that still moulds the historical memory of Estonians and other communities living here?

Kirke Kangro: I think the contemporary art of the 1990s and early 2000s was quite post-traumatic even though it wasn’t expressed in processing historical



experiences in the manner of literature and film. The experience of the traumatic “stagnation” era of the late 1970s and early 1980s and the boundary-crossing, uncompromising attitude was expressed mainly in the positions and views of artists who were active during that period. They used elements of the traumatic era but were oriented to the context of the Western world.

Wartime and post-war sufferings are strongly linked with the topic of demographics and ethnicity, and when contemporary art has approached these themes, it has done so in a more deconstructionist vein. Local artists have not been interested in national soul-searching if it is devoid of an international context, and new art in Estonia has always looked to the West. The less radical artistic community has dealt with creating a self-mythology of a kind, but for more avant-garde contemporary art, topics related to ethnic and national history smack of the Establishment.

The events that befell Estonians during the Second World War and the Stalin era have been much covered in the media space, by historians and writers, the state mainstream has dealt with that. There wouldn’t be a point for contemporary art to retell that story and illustrate well-known positions. The theme is already covered by other institutions, and modern artists do

not sense they have anything much to add in terms of covering, exposing, and analysing the situation. But it isn’t ruled out that at some point there will be an artist who is able to explore post-war trauma in the context of the present day and depict it from some stimulating angle. And Estonian contemporary artists *have* dealt with the after-effects of the traumas – take the works of Kristina Norman, for example.

A truncated version of this interview was first published in Estonian in Sirp: Estonian cultural weekly, 7 September 2018.

Kirke Kangro (b. 1975) has worked with installation, sculpture, video and performative situations that are staged for the camera; the results are elaborately refined and metaphorical in character. She has curated several international exhibitions and currently works as the Dean of Fine Arts at the Estonian Academy of Arts.

Body Talk



Antti Tapio Kiuru

Antti Tapio Kiuru (b. 1977) is a journalist who studied aesthetics. An art lover, he lives and works in Helsinki.

I first met Jaanus Samma about nine years ago when I was producing the first issue of Normihomolehti, a Finnish queer magazine. I had stumbled upon AAFAGC, Jaanus's photo series of men doing traditional rural chores, and wanted to publish the photos in the magazine. Jaanus said yes, he came to Helsinki for the launch party and we have been friends ever since. We have often visited each other in Tallinn and Helsinki and spent holidays on Muhu island and in Pirkanmaa.

Jaanus Samma at the exhibition "Based on a True Story" at MeetFactory, Prague, 2018. Photo: Libor Galia

Jaanus's practice has taken several turns over the years, mixing gender, spatial politics and life stories. Some of his works carry a historic point of view and some appropriate found images, such as street art from around the world, which he has used in his sweaters and scarves. We talked about art in his attic studio in Tallinn's Old Town.

When did you first realise that you wanted to be an artist?

It happened very naturally, without really having to decide. I started taking art courses in primary school, and later attended a high school that specialised in art. After graduation, it was only natural for me to continue studying art at the university level.

You were born in the Soviet Union. What impact did it have on you?

I was so young when the Soviet Union collapsed, so probably the messy and chaotic 1990s influenced me more than the Soviet years. For me, in the aftermath of collapse, the 1990s is a confusing and exciting time for coming to terms with the changed reality and rapid influx of new ideas and viewpoints – in both good and bad.

What is your most important childhood memory?

Actually, I am working on a project that is connected to a childhood memory at the moment. It is a story about a Flemish landscape painting from the 17th century that my father sold to the Art Museum of Estonia at the end of 1980s. With that money we were finally able to buy a yellow Zaporozhets. It was a true “people’s car” of the Soviet Union, and the most affordable vehicle at the time.

The car really made a difference for my family because it gave us the freedom to move about, and every summer we would go on camping trips to different parts of Estonia. During the trips, I took my first photos, some of which look a bit similar to the painting – a group of small figures on the backdrop of a Baroque forest.

The project is about the value of art and things in different times. Thanks to the car, I have many beautiful memories that would not have happened had we kept the brown painting on the wall. The landscape painting gave us an opportunity to leave the city and explore nature.

What motivates you in your work?

For me it's always exciting when I have a chance to collaborate with people from other fields. For instance, when working on *Kodavere Outhouse*, an installation and artistic research project that is centred around a



Exhibition "Outhouse by the Church" at Nomas Foundation, Rome, 2018
Photo: Roberto Apa

dilapidated outhouse covered with pre-war graffiti, I invited various people to join me. Conservator Hilikka Hiiop helped me with the conservation of its half-rotten boards, and folklorist Andreas Kalkun investigated the obscene layer of local folk songs. Maybe it is because I mostly work alone that I greatly value the possibility to exchange ideas and learn new things.

How would you describe yourself as an artist; do you have a distinct style?

I like to keep things open-ended and usually try to avoid being labelled. Being an artist is already a label in itself and it comes with a very specific set of limitations.

I like working in the grey areas that can't be rigidly defined and where you can't exactly tell what is what. For example, in the case of the *Hair Sucks* sweater project, it is hard to say if the collection of hand-knitted sweaters falls under design, fashion, handicraft or fine art. And in the end, it doesn't really matter, does it?

How have you changed as an artist during your practice?

It is hard to say what has changed exactly. I'm quite restless and constantly try to experiment with new media and subject matter. I recently surprised myself by doing some traditional prints, something that



"Flaminio Station 1", 2017. Digital print on ceramic tiles, metal frame, rubber toilet pulls and chains. Photo: Roberto Apa. Courtesy of the artist and Temnikova & Kasela Gallery



"Sweaters" at the exhibition "Messages" at Aine Art Museum, Tornio, 2018. Photo: Jaanus Samma. Courtesy of the artist and Temnikova & Kasela Gallery



"Mythology of the toilet" at the 6th Artishok Biennale, Tallinn, 2018. Blanket and jock straps. Photo: Dénes Farkas

I hadn't done after finishing my BA in graphic art 15 years ago. So you never know what might come next.

What about your interest in gender politics? Do you consider yourself to be a political artist?

I can't say that I consider myself to be a political artist. Naturally, my works have an agenda, as do most artworks to a greater or lesser extent, and many of my works are quite critical and hopefully inspire people to reflect on themselves and society. In essence, they could be seen as political artworks, but I feel that such labels only come at the expense of other aspects.

Why are you interested in dicks and genitalia? There are a lot of them in your works.

Really? Well, there are some on the *Hair Sucks* sweaters and in *The Chairman's Tale* and ... Maybe it is a theme then. But I'm not interested in genitalia for their own sake; all the elements in my work have a specific role and purpose.

How do you choose which direction to take your art to?

I often don't have a clear starting point. The next project usually develops from the last. For example, with the *Outhouse by the Church* exhibition I had in Rome

last autumn, there were several reasons why I became interested in the topic of public toilets. Many of my earlier works were somehow linked to it already: I had collected graffiti from public toilets for the sweaters and I had found that toilets used to be an important meeting place while researching Soviet gay history.

But when I tried to find photos of these architectural objects, it was almost impossible to find any, as if they never existed. No matter how centrally located they were, people made photos (un)consciously in a way that the toilet wouldn't be on the picture. It is interesting how much effort we put in ignoring uncomfortable and ugly things, without even realising it.

How do you keep yourself in a creative mindset?

The most important thing is to have the freedom to allow yourself to be bored. Being bored is the biggest luxury we can have.

What do you dream about?

There are times when I have many dreams, and then times I don't dream at all. It is hard to answer this question and not to be primitive about it. Many of my works are connected to dreams.



"Collection of Toilet Pulls 3 & 4", 2017. Porcelain toilet pulls, showcase. Photo: Stanislav Stepaško
Courtesy of the artist and Temnikova & Kasela Gallery



Jaanus Samma (b. 1982) is an artist based in Tallinn. His works span across a variety of media from installation and video to textile and drawings, focusing on topics such as public space, the representation of male sexuality and queer narratives in history.

Closeness to the Everyday

Lars-Erik
Hjertström
Lappalainen

Lars-Erik Hjertström Lappalainen (b. 1967) is an art critic, curator and lecturer. This year, he published an art philosophy book, BIG DIG (on passivity and contemporary art), together with Jonatan Habib Engqvist, with whom he and Annika von Hausswolff are the editors and board of www.tsnok.se.

Tova Mozard. *The Theatre*. 2007. Photo. Courtesy of the Cecilia Hillström Gallery and the artist. (Exhibition view). Photo: Taavi Piihemann

Virginia Woolf wrote about her luncheon parties before and after the war. People said the same things, but still, something was different, completely different. The “murmurs” were different. The nuances and specificity in what they were saying came from those murmurs. Through their works, the artists in this exhibition all transmit certain murmurs that I would call the feeling of closeness to the everyday. Closeness to the everyday is not a well-defined starting point, either as a concept or as a reality. Nonetheless, it is a starting point as well as something specific.



Annika Eriksson. *I Am the Dog That Was Always Here (Loop)*. 2013. Video. 07:00. Courtesy of the artist. (Exhibition view).



Dana Sederowsky. *Special Announcement: The Exit*. 2016. Video. 00:58. Courtesy of the artist. (Exhibition view).



Closeness to the everyday is not captured in the more clearly defined categories preferred by art discourse (such as consumption, the home, the city, the institution, and the biographical). Nor is it correct to say that this art is part of the artistic category of: “The Everyday”. The everyday is, of course, the usual, the common, the impersonal, and the banal; it denotes being disturbed in a certain way and of being at peace in a certain way. A kind of low-key but personal satisfaction and an annoyance too insignificant to share with other people. It is upheaval. It is a pattern of habits and the events that break these habits. And all that is also relevant to what I call “the closeness to the everyday”. But as an art term, the everyday mainly denotes these phenomena, and others as well. Like, for instance, something neglected that must be made visible by art, or a certain way of doing things that artists try to include in their practice by, such as using artistic media in an amateurish manner. When I say that being close to the everyday is a starting point for these artists, I mean that rather than having the everyday as a theme or as a method of working, they include the everyday in their art, whatever their actual subject matter might be. The closeness to the everyday is the very presence of the everyday in the work (or in its reception) as a sensibility. One feels that it is there, or that it must be there.

Things that are close to the everyday influence the everyday without being part of it. Annika Eriksson’s film about the dogs of Istanbul shows dogs as something that have been there forever, century after century. They are close to the everyday without being a clearly defined part of somebody’s everyday life. With this comes a different temporal dimension that influences

us, a more original way of being together that reminds us of activities that don’t have an aim other than being pleasant. Which therefore provokes the question: “what am I actually doing when I live?” The feeling of the intimacy of the everyday can be conveyed in various ways. For example, by giving the impression that the ideas came to the artist while he or she was away from the studio. Many of Santiago Mostyn’s works leave you with the impression that his artistic practice is always defined as: whatever was the most available way to test out an idea he had while standing in the hallway of his flat, after which he went out and carried out the idea. The closeness to the everyday remains in the work as a feeling of an everyday quick solution.

In Dana Sederowsky’s works, the everyday is present as a feeling of the elements, or of what David Foster Wallace describes in his commencement speech to liberal arts students as what water is for fish:

“The plain fact is that you graduating seniors do not yet have any clue what ‘day in, day out’ really means. There happen to be whole, large parts of adult American life that nobody talks about in commencement speeches. One such part involves boredom, routine, and petty frustration. ... How to keep from going through your comfortable, prosperous, respectable adult life dead, unconscious, a slave to your head and to your natural default setting ... day in and day out. ... The fact is that in the day-to-day trenches of adult existence, banal platitudes can have life-or-death importance ... The capital-T Truth is about life BEFORE death. It is about making it to 30, or maybe 50, without wanting to shoot yourself in the head. ... and everything to do with simple awareness; awareness of what is so real and essential, so hidden in plain sight all around us,

that we have to keep reminding ourselves, over and over: ‘This is water, this is water.’”

Look at Sederowsky’s work *All This For What* (2017), a linguistic object, the very title written with neon tubes, and you will understand how this work is closely tied to the everyday. How meaninglessness, boredom, routine, and petty frustration give rise to the driving forces behind art: maybe this is why making art is necessary. The everyday is something that lacks an end, a justifying “for what”. Instead, the everyday turns everything into a means: a person sleeps to be able to work to earn money to eat and to sleep one more day to... it goes on. Are there more than two solutions? Either that the everyday as a whole is an end in itself, or at least leads to it, or that there are moments in which you can just be, for the hell of it, and do something just because it is fun. Sederowsky seems to want to work through everyday life in order to transform it like an alchemist, while Annika Eriksson often seems to work from the exceptional moments of the hamster wheel of the everyday. Exceptions are what remain when all of our efficient everyday modes of life are taken away. She focuses on the moments of complete presence and companionship in certain situations: the companionship of cats on the carpet, pure community.

Closeness to the everyday is not only associated with everyday activities, but also with the gaps and blanks of emptiness and the isolation it contains. Waiting. Cancelled meetings. Gaps that you sometimes want to remove from the everyday so that it will be more whole and less uncomfortable. This is probably what Meira Ahmemulic was referring to when she said that she “realised that the experiences [her] mother had to offer were worth little to her school”.

I want to emphasise that this experience – of the incommunicability of crucial experiences – belongs to the closeness to the everyday as a blockage of your everyday from that of other people. It is this blockage, like a void or a wall, that is part of the closeness to the everyday, not the experience that cannot be shared, as if that experience lacked form and, to a greater extent, sensibility.

In Sirous Namazi’s works, the very loss of the everyday seems to constitute a certain closeness to the everyday. And Meriç Algün’s everyday seems to contain potential spaces and latent narratives that the current status quo have dispersed and made invisible. Take, for instance, her novel, which consists only of sample sentences from dictionaries: so many latent stories! Or the room she made, from where you can apply for residency in any country, as if the door that leads out of it would take you to any of them. These places and stories are her “closeness to the everyday”. Tova Mozard’s works often contain a temporal aspect that constitutes someone’s closeness to the everyday, that the person would want to be their everyday (e.g. his film *Wall of Love*, where a woman tries to preserve a certain time period and live in it, to become part of it).

Closeness to the everyday is a starting point and, in a way, also the atmosphere of the works, their element.

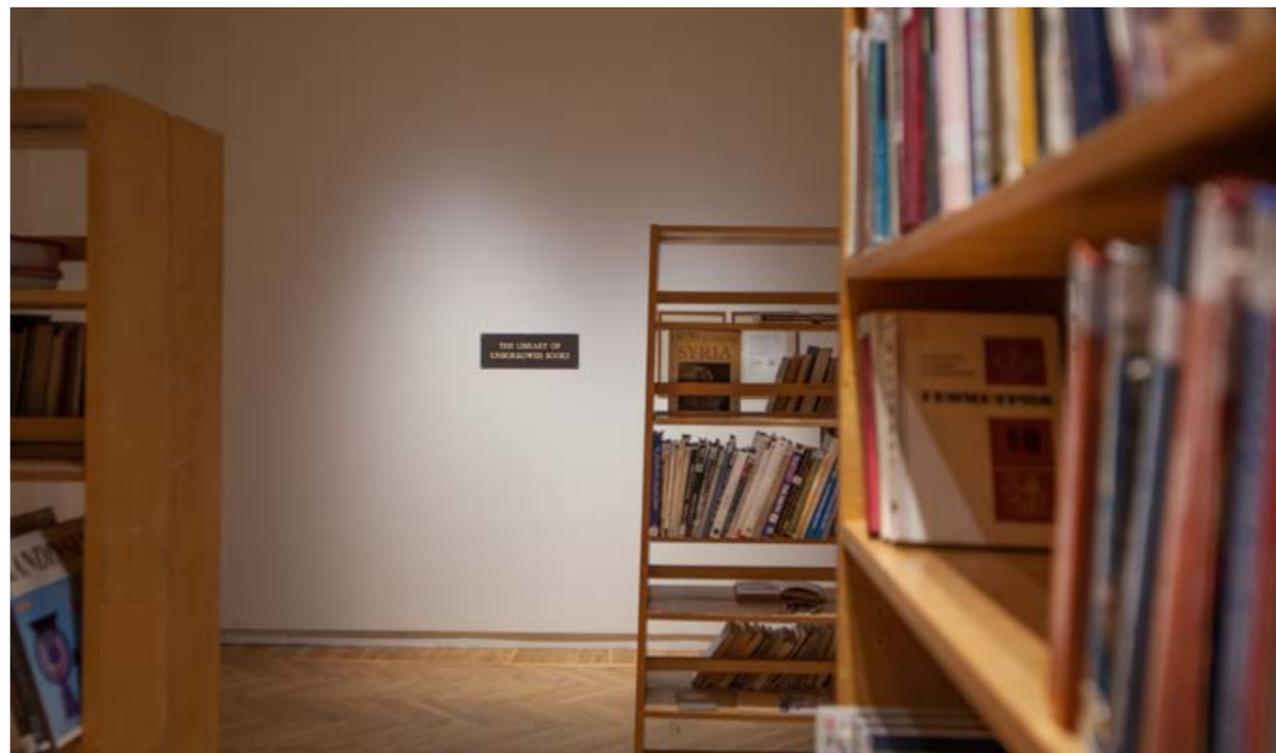
I would like to proceed to some practical concepts that the artists use to make art from this closeness to the everyday. These concepts are used to convey the undetermined “closeness to the everyday” in a temporarily or partially determined form. These are



Sahar Al-Khateeb. *Untitled*. 2019. Site-specific installation: found objects. Courtesy of the artist. (Exhibition view).

expressive concepts: repetition, emptiness or muteness, and fun: fun as something that is worth doing on its own, an aim in and of itself. These are all different ways of shaping space and time into passages for the closeness of the everyday. Repetition is definitely one of them, since, as Gilles Deleuze has written, repetition is a condition of action rather than a concept of reflection. Dana Sederowsky, who works in an extremely repetitive manner, has a work with a title that formulates repetition as a character and as production: *Monotony Is a Virtue, Repetition Is a Strength, Practice Makes Progress* (2015). The thing that is changed, or produced through repetition is not actually the product (the done or the made) but the subject and the mode of the action (i.e. it becomes a strength and a virtue in the same way that a tragedy is repeated as a farce). Formally, Sederowsky often works in post-avant-garde styles, from conceptual art through performance art and the multimedia aesthetics of the 1980s. But unlike the tendency of conceptual art to humorously explore the concept of art, she uses its methods to contemplate questions of the everyday, i.e. about meaninglessness and what to do with it. The everyday is repetitive: schedules that are imposed from the outside, habits that are voluntarily produced from within, rules of thumb that make

everyday life easier and sometimes become prejudices that overshadow existence. Purposeless, pointless and unproductive repetition: in *Monotony Is A Virtue...* she covers the walls from floor to ceiling with repetitions of the title. It seems that she doesn't want to add anything or to re-contextualise, but just to drill down and rummage through the facts of the everyday, hoping that something will happen. She wants to empty the words to get a new start, certainly not in order to finally leave behind the Sisyphean everyday existence, but to introduce something new: something that hasn't been written. When she finishes writing, she stands up and paints everything white with a roller. She begins in the middle and there are breathtaking photos of how the emptiness, the white colour, takes over the walls and spreads. Is everything in vain? It always is. But maybe not this time, since the destruction of the result refers



Meriç Algün. *The Library of Unborrowed Books*. 2012–. Section VIII: Tartu Public Library, Tartu, 2018. Site-specific installation with books, shelves, a brass sign and two contracts. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Nordenhake. (Exhibition view).



Santiago Mostyn. *Delay*. 2014. Video. 04:00. Courtesy of the artist. Music: *Slow Wave* (Susanna Jablonski and William Rickman). (Exhibition view).

to the ultimate passivity, which is the primordial form of life: a receptiveness, the feeling of being influenced by something. Closeness to the everyday also seems to approach that sensitivity, that feeling of bare life. Without such passivity, no new habits would arise, claims Deleuze. This means that everyday itself is based upon such a creative passivity that creates new habits. That is what this white patch refers to.

Habits, in turn, are what “imply subjectivity” and “constitute identity”. Habits are not merely behaviours, or patterns of movement, they are also the feelings that are associated with different behaviours. They constitute a large part of what I am calling here: “the closeness to the everyday”; a certain atmosphere of emotions, including the sensation of normality. Emptiness does not necessarily have to be filled with a new creation or new habits. Sometimes it is itself used as a distance, either as a ravine or a wall, but definitely as a distance that isolates. A silence. It nullifies responses and, above all, subjectivity. I think Santiago Mostyn faces such an experience when he goes out in one of his films and harasses people with caresses. Another version of this is the isolation that is present in almost everything that Tova Mozard photographs. In this sense, her images are mute. She uses cropping, not so much to isolate the object (as photographers have traditionally done) but, to capture the lack of relationships in which the photographed exists. The comedian is without an audience. A dog is without an owner. The loneliness of the subjects grows; the strong sensation that this character really belongs in its surroundings spreads the loneliness to cover the entire pictorial space, so that the pictured place starts

to feel isolated or even like a backdrop: detached from everything. In their environments, Mozard's characters become like Platonic ideas: the idea of a policeman is one who makes the gestures and says the necessary phrases, even if there is no one to arrest. Like a theatre of essence, as if the world were a backdrop, and not real. And that is exactly the condition of belonging of the person portrayed. The people in Tova Mozard's portraits seem to always exist in their own time capsules: as if the past hasn't disappeared and the future will not produce anything new. It is a time of imagination or a time of the spirit, but they also contribute to everyday life. Maybe it is not the real world, not our time, but the world and the time in which he or she belongs.

There is a strange connection between Mozard's surroundings and the rooms made by Meriç Algün. They are distillations of institutions, so pure they could hardly actually exist. But they do exist, not in reality, not even in the consciousness of people, but in the closeness to the everyday that we are always almost conscious of. Just like with the murmurs. They are there like exteriors of experiences of the unreality of our ordinary life. The library of all the books that no one has ever borrowed has an intensive kind of existence. These books belong together, and they deserve a library where a population of people who didn't read them can gather. That would be everybody. It is a fantasy of a shared negative cultural heritage that we all belong to, and that possibly has an intense reality in a situation where you feel like the only one who has not read the classics of a certain nation. Sometimes you get the impression that Algün's rooms are the spaces inside or between us, that they depict things in our lives

in the same way as the strange architectural elements in Kafka's works remind us of something familiar.

Meira Ahmemulic also manages to create such a distance, a kind of gap, between the subject and its surroundings. Sometimes it is the growing gap between the person in front of the camera and the person behind it; sometimes she focuses on the feeling of not fully being where you are. For example, when she goes from Sweden to New York and meets another person from the Balkans, nothing in their relationship seems to pass through references to the Balkans, to New York or to Sweden, but just takes place between two people in an undefined place. Maybe this place is exile; maybe that's the only place they really belong to. But exactly who belongs in exile? What subject? The film is biographical, but as the story of their relationship develops the biographical merely becomes a form (as Chris Kraus wrote in one of her books). The form keeps their stories separate, keeps the events in place, but at the same time the "I" in the stories is revealed in such a manner that, at certain points, it is not clear who the "I" is. A new subject has appeared as "I" and it is like a subject that stands between two (or more) bodies, between stories, between biographies. The subject of exile? Maybe. Or rather, any subject that happens to end up in exile and shapes itself under those conditions. It is a subject that belongs to us all as a potentiality, as a result of our human faculties and powers in that kind of situation.

Pretty much the same thing happens to a subject when you remember something! When I remember an event in which I have participated, I am no longer the same person who participated in the event. The memory is not part of either the event or the present, but part of the distance that separates them. Memory exists between two subjects, between two different normal states and maybe the memory itself has a normal state.

Sirous Namazi's attempt to remember in detail what his childhood home looked like before a catastrophe, repeating it or details from it, may not be able to restore it, but releases a subject belonging to the closeness to the everyday that can approach the normality of the past and connect it with the new normal state. Why is this so difficult? Perhaps because he wants access to childhood, which has never been a talkative phenomenon. The Latin word *infantia* denotes both childhood and muteness, the inability to speak, speechlessness. In this attempt to remember, which cannot be passed through language since the closeness to the everyday is stuck in the murmur, or captured in words, a silent void opens up between the present I, and the past me, that is neither here nor there, but is only a subject of distance. Distance, however, is the closeness to the everyday.

There is not only a gap, but also a certain kind of proximity, or rather an approaching something that is similar to our way of becoming intimate with something today. Our first step in beginning to belong to something is to have fun. Annika Eriksson seems to start with situations where we largely ignore the meaninglessness of the everyday. Recreational musicians, playgrounds, men petting animals: there are countless examples of her focus on the moments in the everyday that are meaningful in and of themselves and might not lead to anything at all. If we wanted to find an aesthetic tradition that was similar to this approach, it probably would be Friedrich Schiller's interpretation of "play". He claimed that only when people play are they completely human, and he included playing among the arts. For me, this is an element of the closeness to the everyday since you are constantly connected to your experience of play and of leisure: an experience of doing something only for the pleasure of doing it. I think that for contemporary art "fun" is a much more important term than "play". In order to find the aspect of contemporary relevance in an object, artists look for the fun in it. Fun is to us what agony was to the existentialist artist; it is the mood of the world. When artists talk publicly about their exhibitions, they never forget to say that "it was a lot of hard work, but so much fun!" Fun is the inaugural receptive mood today,



Sirous Namazi. *Chandelier*. From the Series *Twelve Thirty*. 2014. Sculpture: glass, brass, lamps and plywood. Courtesy of the artist and the Nordenhake Gallery. (Exhibition view)



Tova Mozard. *A selection of photos from 2003–2016*. Courtesy of the Cecilia Hillström Gallery and the artist. (Exhibition view).

even in a sad work. All of the activities associated with leisure may be counted as fun, since that is the time in life when we do things that are worth doing in and of themselves. Meriç Algün's delight in using constraints as a method is definitely part of the play-art aesthetic. There is indeed no lack of playfulness in Sirous Namazi's works! Not to mention the idea of decorating, which is contained in it. In the same way, people decorate their homes by, for example, knitting doilies: this is an extreme example of an aim in and of itself, in both its beauty and the action required for it. Tova Mozard has photographed many people who see entertainment as their calling. Where else and when else does Santiago Mostyn try to get in touch with people on the streets if not in the part of Stockholm where people spend their free time, where the bars and clubs are found. This is the place where the closeness to the everyday in them can be approached. Fun is a

concept of reception, while the others were concepts of expression.

And when it comes to the theme of the exhibition, belonging, I believe that it must be understood in this sense: belonging as understanding the murmur that is our closeness to the everyday. And maybe only art can treat things, topics, and experiences in relation to this murmur, this sense of what is close to the ordinary, but not really part of ordinary things. Through art, the theme of belonging receives its proper dynamics. It is treated from the point of view of the closeness to the everyday, the murmur that makes the same different, like repetition does, that prevents you from understanding ordinary stuff in a new environment, and decides whether your way of dealing with things is fun, has spirit, or is just mute and "actual fact-ish".

The Tartu Art Museum is exhibiting the international group exhibition "Stories of Belonging. Contemporary Art from Sweden" which is open from the 17th of January until the 5th of May 2019. It is part of an ongoing series of exhibitions organised by the Tartu Art Museum that introduce some of the most significant contemporary art from Estonia's neighbouring regions. "Stories of Belonging" brings a selection of exciting and relevant authors and works from the Swedish art scene to Tartu, which focus on the social problems related to belonging and being excluded in Sweden and elsewhere.

Sweden is known as a country that invests heavily in the welfare and equality of its people. The country has also had a very

open immigration policy and has accepted a large number of refugees in the recent past. Despite this, people with foreign backgrounds or different ways of life have to face daily problems, such as difficulties in adaptation, exclusion, discrimination, etc. These problems are also important to many artists working in Sweden. Through their works, they express their emotions or personal experiences and try to raise awareness of the situation of minority groups and those who are excluded. Although the exhibition introduces the Swedish contemporary art scene, the themes of belonging and exclusion are universal and open to interpretation, drawing parallels and identification from the position of viewers all around the world.

The participating artists are Meira Ahmemulic, Meriç Algün, Sahar Al-Khateeb, Annika Eriksson, Santiago Mostyn, Tova Mozard, Sirous Namazi and Dana Sederowsky; the exhibition is curated by Joanna Hoffmann and Hanna-Liis Kont.

Hanna-Liis Kont

Ones to Watch:

Estonia and Serbia's Young Fashion Designers

Stefan Žarić



Stefan Žarić (b. 1991) is an art historian and an independent curator based in Serbia, researching Serbian and Estonian fashion and design heritage.

To a common global mind, even one aware of fashion, Estonian and Serbian fashion – or in a broader sense, Baltic and Balkan fashion – would probably not ring a bell. Even contemporary fashion studies' curricula still overlooks the Baltic and Balkan regions despite the ever-growing inclusivity dictated by the neoliberal order and the radicalisation of leftist ideas.

Nevena Ivanović Neo Design, SS 18: "Ensoneo". Photo: Alek Živković.

As such, to justify its Western centrism (which to some extent could be justified given that both fashion and fashion studies emerged as an academic discipline in the West) fashion academia has expanded its scope to those fashion cultures that the West has both positively and negatively affected. Furthermore, this inclusivity could be read as a sort of redemption for the historical “misbehavior” of dominant structures towards oppressed ones. As a response to *Black Lives Matter* and Beyonce’s *Lemonade*, African cultures came to focus, which resulted in the splendor of costumes of *Black Panther*, celebrating the creative expression of Africa’s cultural diversity. Discussions on controversial laws banning different Islamic veils in the West inspired San Francisco’s de Young Museum to stage the *Contemporary Muslim Fashions* exhibit. Furthermore, the USA’s problematic stance on immigration has also sparked a conversation about South, Central, and Native American fashions, yet still. It could be argued that only the countries who were historically and are presently “trapped” between the East and the West, such as Estonia and Serbia, are the ones least visible to fashion academia.

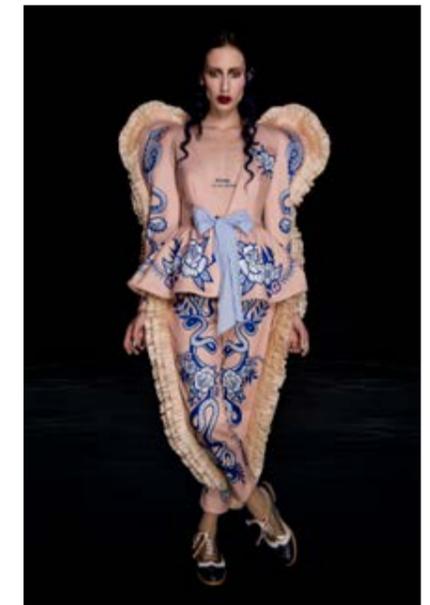
However, both Baltic and Balkan regions have gained significant visibility in the last few decades. The Baltic States became visible due to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and their further ascension into the European Union in early 2000s, which enabled Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian people to disseminate their native cultures both continentally and globally. On the other side, the breakup of Yugoslavia and the seemingly everlasting political turmoil of the Balkans established the region as Europe’s very own exotic other. This turmoil also seemingly serving to make the region crucial to global politics and conflict resolution as well as peacemaking strategies. As such, Samuel Goff’s statement in his text *What is Post-Soviet?* that “Eastern Europe and Eurasia have always been particularly useful sites of projection for the West as they combine familiarity (Eastern Europe is still Europe, after all) with the exoticism provided by past ideological conflict”^[1] does not come as a surprise. No matter the efforts of both countries to overcome their pasts, which are indeed more fruitful in Estonia than in Serbia, Estonia will remain mostly described as post-Soviet, and Serbia as post-Yugoslav. Whether post-Soviet or post-Yugoslav, both countries, alongside the rest of Eastern Europe have one common signifier: Post-Communist. The constant submission of Baltic and Balkan states to their former political constructs leaves little space for the understanding of creativity beyond the infamous post-communist contextualisation. Such narratives lead to a cemented belief that every Eastern European movie or novel must be about war. That socialist modernism and brutalism

are the only architectural expressions Eastern Europeans are capable of, and that Gosha Rubchinskiy is all that fashion designers can do. Contrarily to this belief, Kai Lobjakas, Director of the Estonian Museum of Applied Arts and Design, finds that: “The Baltic States were the Soviet Union’s own internal West”^[2] as they absorbed the most of western modernism. Yugoslavia was also the most westernised part of the Balkans, which resulted in the first ever fashion week in Eastern Europe being held in Belgrade in 1996.

Belgrade Fashion Week helped launch and establish the careers of many national and regional designers. Such as London-based Roksanda Ilinčić, famous for working with Kate Middleton, Michelle Obama, and Melania Trump. Fashion week still remains a fertile ground for both established and emerging designers, especially since 2017, when it introduced the *Fashion Scout South East Europe* competition, which enables the winner to compete in the London Fashion Week’s *Ones to Watch* program. This is exactly what brought Estonian and Serbian designers together: Ana Ljubinković in the SS 2017 competition, Triinu Pungits and Nevena Ivanović competing together in SS 2018, and most recently, Kristel Kuslapuu in the AW 2018 competition. While each one of them is unique in their own right, their designs have one thing in common: geography is nothing but a construct worth of being deconstructed.

Ana Ljubinković

Ana Ljubinković, Serbia’s finest fashion artist (and I intentionally use the word artist and not a designer) is a *par excellence* example of how a creator from an Eastern European country doesn’t have to compromise with the imposed notion of post-communist. Unlike Ilinčić, who moved to London and acquired British citizenship, Ljubinković, despite all the international success (Lady Gaga, Miley Cyrus, and Paloma Faith being in favour of her designs), remained in Serbia, which makes her designs even more intriguing and seemingly out of place. Referring to the complexity of sociopolitical issues and of Belgrade’s postwar burden, Tahmina Begum in her article *Long live kitsch, long live Ana Ljubinković* raised a question on how, in such a setting, was Ljubinković able to come up with such



Ana Ljubinković, FW 17/18: “Moon Goddess”, custom print pantsuit with ABO shoes
Photo: Miloš Nadaždin
MUA: Ena Jović
Hair: Studio Olivio
Model: Fox / Marina Krtinić

“queer designs”^[3]? The answer is simple: because Ljubinković favours art above anything else. Painter by education, Ljubinković is a master in subverting form and colour. Pastel tones of baroque gowns and scenes from 18th and 19th century vedute, combined with the imagery of bubblegum tattoos and kitsch porcelain figurines (both common for growing up in Yugoslavia) come alive in a distinctive visual language paying tribute to Gucci, Arora, de Castelbajac, and Katrantzou. It is no wonder that one of her latest collections is named after the Warhol quote: “Kiss Me with Your Eyes”. Within Belgrade’s socialist concrete, Ljubinković creates a world in which love for beauty reigns as the ultimate art form. Preferably in the colour pink.



Triinu Pungits, FW 19/20: "Hayami"
 Photo: Riina Varol
 MUAH: Piret Sootla
 Illustrations: Marja-Liisa Plats
 Model: Sage_mgmt / Zhanna



Triinu Pungits, SS 18/19: "Ehemi"
 Photo: Riina Varol
 Make Up: Ellen Walge
 Model: MJ-Models / Juula Miia
 Hair: Mari Uibo



Nevena Ivanović Neo Design, SS 18: "Ensoneo"
 Photo: Alek Živković
 Hair: Danilo Stojanović
 Make Up: Sanja Orlandić Sretković
 Model: Marijana Stracenski

Triinu Pungits

It is not the usage of blue, black, and white that makes Triinu Pungits' designs distinguishably Estonian, but rather the masterful awareness of textiles and fabrics the historically run through the veins of Estonian artists and craftsmen. Pungits' approach to design comes both from her background as a designer and as a teacher of textile design. As such, her creations are characterised by a skillful usage of cut, colour, and texture, while a personal touch of artistic freedom is achieved through the utilisation of different digital prints. Like Nordic landscapes and climate dominated by a minimalistic combination of shapes and colors, Pungits designs are so carefully constructed that they almost look accidental. Whether oversized coats in the tradition of Marit Ilison or bathing suits contrasting the Estonian weather, the designer follows the geometry until she reaches the compatibility of her design with the body, and furthermore, the compatibility of those two with the environment. In the designer's own words, her designs "concentrate on the weather that brings down many people, but when being dressed appropriately, such weather is an enriching and intoxicating experience." There's no fashion more appropriate for Estonia than that of Triinu Pungits'.

Nevena Ivanović

If there is anyone who should watch out for Nevena Ivanović and her label *Neodesign*, it would be Björk. If there is ever to be another remake of *Blade Runner* or *Suspiria*, Nevena Ivanović should be appointed the costume designer. Primarily drawing inspiration from her cultural roots, Balkan and Serbian, Ivanović upgrades it with Harajuku aesthetics and technocratic futurism. Equally occupied by nature, organic forms and materials as she is with technology, Ivanović follows the unconventional path that Iris van Herpen, James Merry, and Hrafnhildur Arnardóttir (aka Shoplifter) walked before her. Same as Pungits, Ivanović is, despite being only 26, skilled in comprehending both the poetics and technology of materials and isn't afraid to experiment and fuse them, whether using neoprene or leather. It is not surprising then that both Pungits and Ivanović participated together at last year's London Fashion Week. What Rei Kawakubo did for Japanese and then global fashion, Nevena Ivanović has the potential to do for Serbian fashion. Sooner than later, as it seems.

[1] Samuel Goff, "What is post-Soviet? An essay on the term that caught the world's attention", *The Calvert Journal*, February 20th, 2018 (<https://www.calvertjournal.com/features/show/9672/post-soviet-visions-essay>)
 [2] Kai Lobjakas, *Encounter Estonian Design: An Introduction*, Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design, 2016.
 [3] Tahmina Begum, "Long live kitsch, long live Ana Ljubinković", *Oh Comely*, December 7th, 2018 (<http://ohcomely.co.uk/stories/long-live-kitsch>)

Three Estonian Designers

Nithikul
Nimkulrat

Revealing Hand and Material Traces in Everyday Objects

Nithikul Nimkulrat (b. 1974) is a Thai textile artist, designer, and researcher who has lived in Tallinn and enjoyed Estonian culture for over five years. After being a Professor and then the Head of Department of Textile Design at Estonian Academy of Arts from 2013 to 2018, she moved to Toronto to take the position of Tenured Associate Professor in Material Art and Design at OCAD University.

Design may be a relatively new field in Estonia, only becoming known in the 1990s. However, its root can be traced back more than a century when some design areas were called applied arts, which implied the inclusion of a craft process or “a period of intensive involvement in handwork”^[1].

Raivi Keiv. Porcelain Meets Wood. Photo: Katrin Press

While craft is still inherent in many forms of Estonian design practice today, the term seems to have an inferior connotation in the Estonian modern economy as its translation to Estonian creates a mismatch between something old-fashioned opposed to something forward-looking, which people in the Estonian design scene expect to reach.

This listicle aims to shed light on the exceptional craftsmanship of Estonian design products for everyday life and to consider it a key characteristic that makes Estonian design distinguishable. As access to mass production is extremely limited, small handmade production is commonplace in Estonia. By examining hand and material traces in works created by three Estonian designers, the importance of the craft that is culturally built into Estonian design may be more clearly understood as “a dynamic process of learning and understanding through material experience”¹². The selections of design products include: 1) wooden eyewear frames by Karl Annus of *Framed by Karl*; 2) leather bags by Stella Soomlais; and 3) tableware by Raili Keiv. The everyday objects they design reveal unique hand and material traces that tell the story of the process of making them.

Karl Annus / Framed by Karl

Wood is lightweight and possesses naturally neutral, yet unique colours and patterns, all of which are attributes that one would look for in a pair of comfortable and beautiful eyeglasses. While *Framed by Karl* is not the first or only wooden eyewear maker in the world, what distinguishes their frames from others' are designs that remain true to the material. The type of wood veneers selected for a bespoke frame are still recognisable in the finished product. The material is treated according to the features and qualities of that particular type of wood. Wood continues to be wood in its original colours without disguising itself as another material.

Every wooden eyewear frame by *Framed by Karl* is 100% custom handmade, considering the client's unique features, personality, and preferences. The hand-crafting process starts with selecting and gluing multiple layers of wood veneer to make plywood, then includes bending and cutting the plywood according to the design, sand brushing, and the final polishing. The slow process requires tremendous concentration, patience, and skill from the maker. During this crafting, the eye focuses on the moving hand that controls the tool, to manipulate the material in the holding hand according to the design.



Wooden eyeglasses in use.
Art director: Helene Vetik
Photo: Ken Oja
Model: Laura Streimann
Makeup and hair: Eliise Brigita Mõisamaa
Styling: Kärt Hammer



Seven types of wood veneers used for making frames: alder, ebony, mahogany, maple, padouk, sapele, walnut.
Photo: Ken Oja

Since the entire process is totally hand-crafted, every step takes time, which means that a pair of eyeglasses can take a month to create and the number of eyeglasses made cannot be massive. Hence, the product is special, not only because each pair are specifically made for a client's features and preferences, but also because of the respect to the material and the handicraft process the design and creation entail.



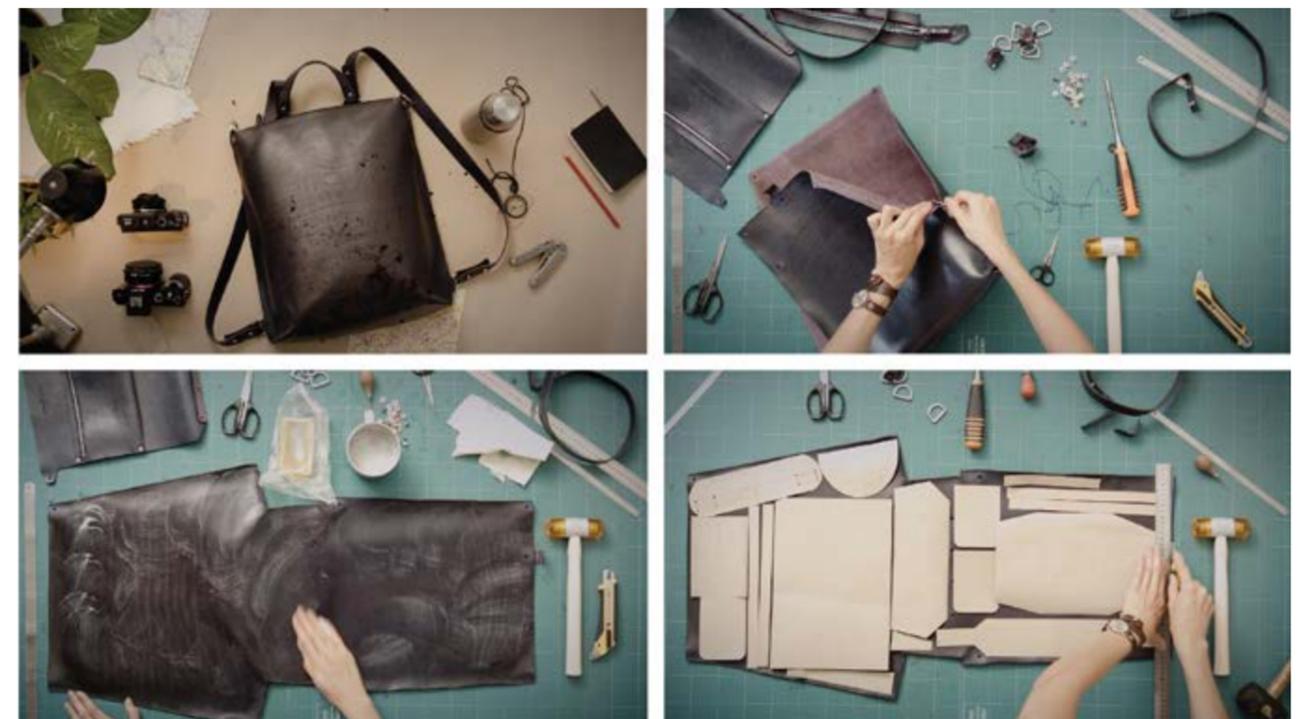
Process of making a wooden frame.
Photos: Maxim Dubovik and Ken Oja

Stella Soomlais

Stella Soomlais's leather bags and accessories combine minimalist aesthetics with functionality. Every bag is made of high-quality, vegetable-tanned cow leather of European origin. Each bag design is also crafted to minimise cutting waste. Any large leather remnants and scraps are used to create smaller bags and accessories. Aiming at producing environmentally-sustainable products, the studio only generates about 2–4% material waste and has an ultimate goal of reaching zero-waste production in 2020.



Library Backpack.
Photo: Renee Altrov



The leather of a bag changes after a long, loving use, and can be repurposed and reprocessed.
Photos: Propapanda



Round 2 – Smaller leather items from the repurposing and reprocessing of a used backpack.
Photo: Propapanda

Although leather is a biodegradable material, the process takes a long time. For this reason, the design of every bag follows the circular economy ideology; meaning that the bags are easy to care for, the details of the bags can be repaired or replaced, and the leather itself can be reused to make new items in a product line called *Round 2*. The leather of Soomlais's bags therefore has multiple life cycles, and is being used to its fullest potential.

In order to generate multiple life cycles for the leather, the design process of one large bag, a backpack for example, comes with a hidden process that includes the design of other smaller items. These small items can then be made once the owner of the bag has returned the used product after a long, loving use. This multi-layered design process would not be achieved without the meticulous craftsmanship of the designer and the maker. The *experienced* material is reprocessed and given a new life in a different form of bags or accessories while material traces remain to tell the leather's experience. Every bag is individual as the natural material never be identical; an information stamp of the completion date, the maker's name, and a serial number, is also included on each item.



Porcelain Meets Concrete: Reuse.
Photo: Riand Davidson.



Process of working with used porcelain plates and industrial concrete. Photo: Riand Davidson.

Raili Keiv

Porcelain is the primary material used by Raili Keiv for creating her tableware. While the designer stays focused on the functionality of the objects, she has been extremely experimental with the possibilities and limitations of porcelain, and extended her material repertoire to include other materials such as wood and concrete. Materials which, according to the designer, are both substances and inspirations for her designs. When using materials other than porcelain, Keiv looks to understand whether a moulding process similar to porcelain is possible.

In *Porcelain Meets Wood*, the designer gains inspiration from the Estonian forests that cover half of its land, and use two materials – warm wood and cold porcelain – in dialogue. In search of harmonies in both materials, she transforms porcelain into wood and wood into porcelain. By doing so, each material manifests the visual characteristics of the other material through the craft of the designer.

Other than porcelain, the other material Keiv has worked with is concrete. Concrete is usually correlated with built environment or large-scale architectural objects. In her series *Porcelain Meets Concrete: Reuse*, the designer utilises concrete moulding to connect two pieces of old porcelain plates. The resulting trays demonstrate material traces in which industrial robust concrete is negotiating with fine and fragile porcelain.

It is apparent in Keiv's tableware that, together with the designer's sensitivity to materials, no other process can replace the hand-crafted process. Peaks of hand and material traces are clearly seen in her works. Each piece of tableware is unique, even though all pieces are made using the same materials, methods, and processes.

A high quality of material and craftsmanship, only achievable by small-scale, local production and close teamwork between designers and makers, are evident in every piece of the above designers' works.

We should keep and maintain our things for years and consume and dispose less in the first place. One way to do this is to be surrounded by everyday functional objects that are unique to our personal preferences and do their job well – products with aesthetic sustainability^[3], such as the works by the above three Estonian designers.

[1] Adamson, G. *Fewer Better Things: The Hidden Wisdom of Objects*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018, p. 20.
[2] Gray, C., & Burnett, G. *Making sense: An exploration of ways of knowing generated through practice and reflection in craft*. In L. K. Kaukinen (Ed.), *Proceedings of the Crafticulation and Education Conference*. Helsinki: NordFo, 2009, p. 51.
[3] Harper, K. H. *Aesthetic Sustainability: Product Design and Sustainable Usage*. London: Routledge, 2018.

Sexting You



with All My Heart

Hansel Tai

Hansel Tai (b. 1994) is a Chinese artist and designer residing in Estonia. His contemporary jewelry work focuses on the Post-Internet Epoch. His upcoming exhibition is *Non-Stick Nostalgia: Y2K Retro Futurism in Contemporary Jewelry* at Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) in New York from March 21, 2019 to July 21, 2019

No one writes love letters anymore. It faded away with the uprising of phone calls and text messages.

Back when I only had a Nokia 5310 instead of a smartphone, I used to write love letters in my half-hearted diary. I say that because it's just a mixture of my own thirsty sexual fantasies, insufferable agony of adolescence and random ink sketches.

SURFING IN THE INTERNET SUMMER, 2015 / brooch / Acrylic, LED, Button cell battery, Brass, 24K Gold: Photo by Peipei Chen, courtesy of the artist



PPOEETTRYY, 2016 / brooch / Acrylic, Peach wood, LED, Button cell battery, Brass, 24K Platinum. Photo: Linfeng Zhang, courtesy of the artist

It was the late 2000s in a small town in the heart of Mainland China. I was pretty sure the one extra pale-looking boy in my middle school class was in the closet, the same as me. And I was hopelessly in love with him. Everyone was using QQ back then, it's a computer-based messaging software similar to MSN (back when it was a thing). I had his contact on mine and I would just stare at his avatar. The little icon would become coloured while he was online. Otherwise it was faded out in black and white. And my whole world would be crushed into dust or immediately rebuilt with avatar changes from one second to the next.

The simple joys of life: some internet surfing, downloading English songs with lyrics that I don't fully understand, writing secret love letters, and staring at boys' QQ avatars.

Nowadays I can use my phone to text guys across various networking apps. Technology wise, it has never been so easy to connect. I hold my phone tightly in hand, the signal is strong and steady. Yet, I found myself utterly isolated. I feel confused and frustrated, something isn't right.

Shortly after, I came to a conclusion: *My Internet is gone*. The Internet I am connected to now is not the same as the Internet back then. It is not *My Internet*. My Internet is a world separated from reality, I need to dial numbers on the phone in order to connect^[1]. And as soon as I'm in, the landline is out. My Internet operates on the Microsoft Windows XP system, with an iconic wallpaper of grassland and blue sky^[2]. My Internet is full of pixels, full of viruses, full of accidental crashes and restarts. My Internet is fairly easy to follow, it is flat, it is slow, yet it is full of potential.

I miss My Internet. I miss *the green light* beaming

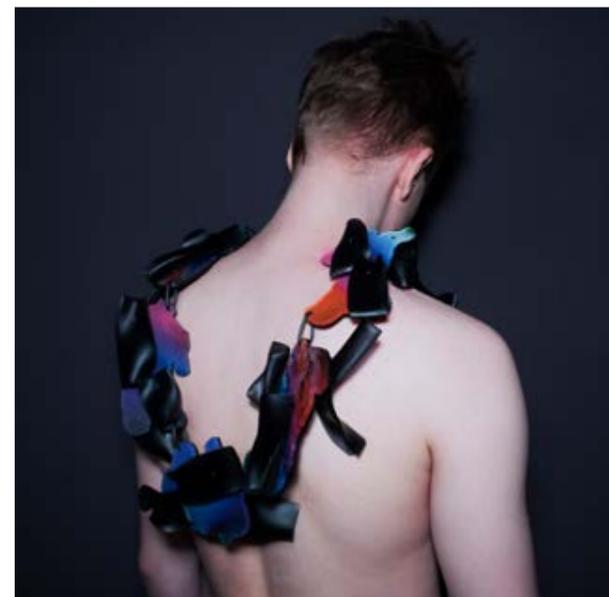
through the giant server box, like it was coming from The Great Gatsby.

My Internet is gone. It upgraded into Wifi, into the upcoming 5G network. The default desktop image of the newest macOS is the Mojave Desert instead of a grassland. Something has shifted to the opposite side over the years.

The virtual space has been mutating nonstop ever since the day of its birth. VR headsets immerse you into the digital world, still it's a one-way ticket, the fantasy of hologram hasn't arrived yet. The communication between the two worlds nowadays, in most of the cases, is still through a plain and glossy display. The resolution and pixel density are accelerating day by day, but the tactile experience hasn't changed much. We are still confronting a cuboid shape, it's still just a window. Yet the power of this one portal is already dangerously excessive, and the boundary starts to dissolve. People have internet sex, they live through the flat display and millions are watching. On the other hand, suicide through Facebook Livestream is more popular than ever.^[3]

Even only through one flat portal, the Internet is already overpowering reality.

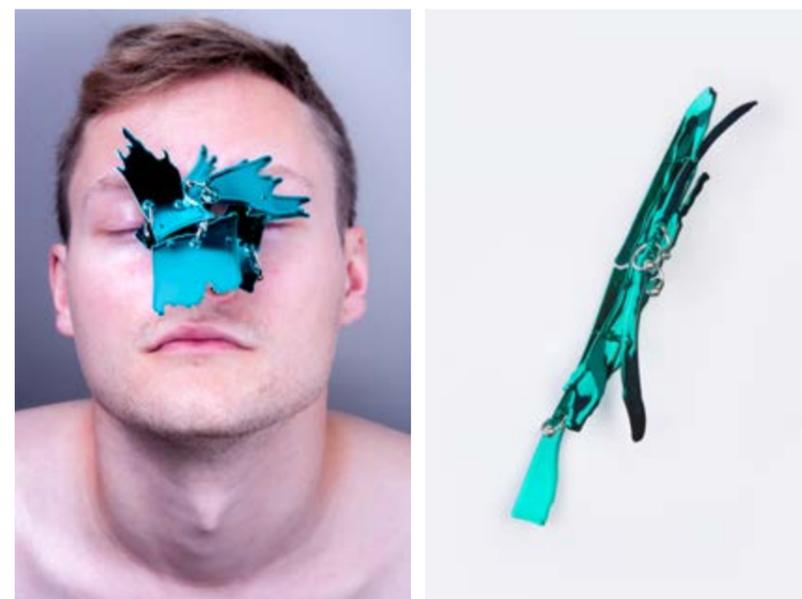
Skeuomorphism is a design language used in graphic user interface design, it mimics the look of mundane objects and virtually represents them on your screens. You can have a bookshelf looking app on your tablet to read books or a notebook app with grids to take notes: A digital skeuomorph of the real thing. We saw the supposed downfall of skeuomorphism in 2013 with the release of iOS 7, a minimalistic iPhone Operating System design following the 2D graphic trend of that time. However, when unpacking the newest Apple watch you will still see a screen with a



HYPER-RENAISSANCE, 2017 / neckpiece / acrylic, silver, rubber
Photo: courtesy the artist

virtual analog clock, with an hour hand and a minute hand pointing to the outside world. Even with a minimalistic graphic design, the functionality (UX) of the calculator app of today still follows the same rules of a physical calculator, it is still skeuomorphic. And we have been here, more than twice.

Skeuomorphism has been intruding on reality long before cyberspace. A surface is always tricky. A gilded wooden chair looks just like a gold chair, vegan leather is really just fabric with a plastic coating. *The finishing is the aesthetic*. We are constantly surrounded by shadows and imitations of the epidermis, both in reality and in the virtual world. And we are numbed by them. It even dates back to when we discovered the linear perspective, with the illusion of the spatial



BMP (BLUE MILK PIERCED), 2018 / brooch / Brass, Chroming, Surgical stainless steel.
Photo: Tanel Veenre, courtesy of the artist

heaven on the ceilings of Vatican churches by the Old Masters. A heaven so similar to our world that it follows the same physical rules, resulting in a seamless transition from real marble column to marble column illustrated by oil paint.

The Internet provides the ultimate skeuomorphic. A life more real than reality. An enchanted finishing for the epidermal layer, down to the smallest pixel. Through the glossy touch screen, an alien world uses all its wisdom to evolve into reality. And I helplessly embrace this, because it's only going forward now. Because I cannot afford to lose again: the separation can be catastrophic.

The fate of our future has been sealed by this unstoppable vision. I live in this hyper-reality. A drone is flying above me, it is quickly pulling away, ascending into the sky. Now I see me. I see me standing on the ground, I see the city, I see earth. I see the earth overused and exhausted. I see the global warming and energy draining. I see the apocalypse. I see mankind building its last spaceship and drifting in to the galaxy.

So now, I am standing at the beginning and the end, immersed in an ecstasy of communication. I am standing at the greatest moment in Homosapien history, under the glorious power of technology with my bleak and cold fascination. I want to write a love letter now. I take out my phone and start texting,

"Hey there."

[1] Dial-up Internet access
[2] Bliss(1996) by Charles O'Rear
[3] "The sheer volume of content broadcast live on the 2 billion-member social network makes it virtually impossible to monitor it all, the spokesperson told The Post." in Facebook: We can't stop all live-stream suicides by Nicolas Vega, October 25, 2017, <https://nypost.com/2017/10/25/facebook-we-cant-stop-all-live-stream-suicides/>



Architecture of Paradox

Gregor Taul

Gregor Taul (b. 1986) is a PhD student in culture studies at the Catholic University of Portugal.

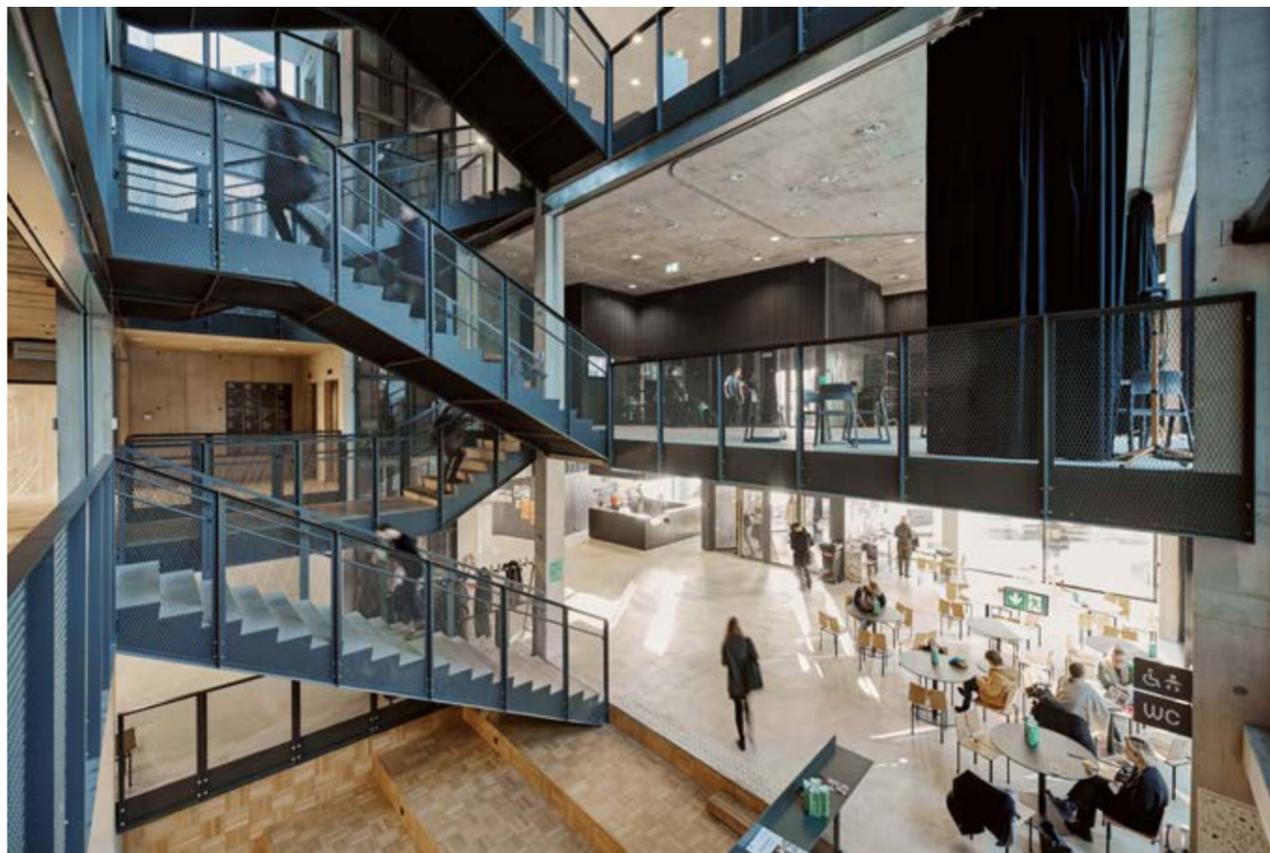
1
In 2009 the Estonian Academy of Arts (EKA) destroyed its historic building in the hope of building a 16 story high-rise in its place. Due to the global economic crises that subsequently affected our government's budget it never happened. In the following years EKA sold its property in the centre of Tallinn, bought a former hosier factory on the other side of the old town and converted it into its new home. The building, which was designed by Kuu Architects (all of the whom are either recent alumni or teachers of EKA) made use of 11 different layers of construction that had been carried out between the years 1920 and 1983.

Photos: Tõnu Tunnel



2

The new building has received so much praise that it is weird to say anything critical about it. I have heard architects and critics hail it as the smartest example of post-1991 Estonian architecture. Not in the sense that it is incredibly high-tech – in fact, it is technically rather outdated – but intelligent in the sense of embodying profound humane space. Firstly, the scale of the building is pitch-perfect. Even the lobby's multi-level atrium is down to earth and there is little rhetoric about the (portly) sanctity of public space. Secondly, after all the smashings the school has gone through, it is pleasant to experience the huge amount of respect that the architects have shown towards the factory building. Many graduates have said that, somehow, the new building with its neatly restored interiors reminds them of the old EKA building. Thirdly, it is a provocative building and a generally captivating example of contemporary visual culture, which has already been used as a case study in various architecture, design or visual art related seminars at EKA. However, in this short text I would like to offer some critical remarks on the building. This is not supposed to be criticism for the sake of criticism, but as an appreciation of the time and energy invested into the project by all the people involved in the building process. The building deserves to be talked about.



3

Whenever I lecture at the new building, I try to ask my students: what do they think about their new school? As a matter of fact, most of the comments have been negative. I sense two explanations for this: (1) the new building has boosted critical thinking in an unheard of pace, or (2) after all those years without a proper home, students have all but lost their touch with reality, i.e. the ability to take into account all the compromises that have to be agreed upon when building such a school. So what do the students complain about? Foremost, they say that there is not enough personal working space and, in fact, not even space for personal belongings. Contrarily to studio-based MFA programmes in some better-off countries where each student is allocated his or her own studio by the academy, the new building provides one large open studio for an entire faculty of up to one hundred students. The lack of space (all in all, 10 square metres per student) is certainly not the architect's nor even the academy's fault, as it represents state policy and the government's take on the arts and humanities in general.

Sadly, this kind of coming to terms with the ridiculous budget has affected the whole rhythm of the building. It is by no means a spectacular example of forward-looking 21st century sustainable educational architecture, but rather represents the spiritless neoliberal circumstances in which the academy currently circulates. Just look at the lousy and anonymous office furniture, cramped classrooms or the extremely congested library (where the culture of mutual respect just does not work, because as soon as you open your mouth, everyone hears it) – from this angle the interior is as uncomfortable as its gets. No one would want to



spend more than three (plus two) years here. This is exactly what is expected of the students! What we see is a attentively state-funded, hierarchical and ordered institution that aims to quickly train a skilled workforce for market needs. Architecture for vocational training and top-down state planning for economic success; not for artistic and academic freedom. This efficiency, high turnover and fast circulation is emphasised by the hollow modular grid, which is cloistered around a lifeless central courtyard which craves for a glass roof and all-year activity.

4

Students tell me that despite the much publicised ideology of a cross-use of various workshops, these spaces have quickly become closed 'islands' where certain departments dominate. While one could say that this is a natural process that could happen anywhere I find it most troubling and as an extreme warning because initiating synergy between the various departments of EKA was seen as the ultimate goal and expectation of the new building.

How do we foster cross-disciplinary interaction with architectural and design decisions though? It seems to me that there might be something expulsive about the darkish walls and tiny corridors of the building. To my mind there also seems to be something wrong with the main entrance, which ungallantly steps away from the street and hides itself behind robust and even frightening pillars. Pillars, as we know, should remind us of classical (civic) architecture and stately order, but here they deliberately fail to install authority and end up as magnified prison bars. OK, I might have got carried away with this metaphor, but I can't help it – the more I look at the entrance, the more uninviting it becomes.

5

The part where the studios are located was designed in a way that it could be separately accessed 24 hours a day. However, it has been closed at night since the inauguration. It is understood that this helps the academy to save thousands of euros on electricity, heating and security bills, but I wonder how much the academy loses on natural creativity, chaotic ideas, bohemian flair and perhaps most importantly on the loyalty and the bond between the school and its students? It is sad to see that the institution has to erase one of the fundamental ideas of its architecture in such a way. It is striking that the students did next to nothing to fight against such closing hours. Does it mean that today's students lack passion? I don't think so. I guess that current students have plenty of other spaces for working and partying at their disposal and they do not want to argue with the management that was just recently able to pull the academy out of a disastrous situation.

6

It is a shame that after all those years of interim exhibition spaces in odd corridors and atria, EKA did not manage to come up with a simple white cube for its new gallery. Not that I wish to insist that a hard core modernist white box with classy shadow gaps is the only option for exhibition spaces, but I do believe it would make life for students much easier – and it would leave a more professional impression as well. In any case, the new gallery space is filled with dozens of needless obstacles. To begin with there is actually not a single unobstructed flat white wall in the gallery, as several unnecessary doors separate the space. One of the walls actually functions as a portable 'door' between the gallery and the main lecture hall – the idea behind

being that the gallery can be turned into a large stage. Certainly a witty and functional use of space, but a huge blow for the independence of the gallery and exhibition-making as such. Besides the aforementioned complications, one of the gallery walls is dominated by the oval shape of the foundation of the 1920s staircase and, last but not least, there are way too many nastily visible sockets all over the place. To make things even more complicated for the exhibiting students, the floor is strangely uneven and the gallery attendant's working space is located inside the gallery. On the one hand, this DIY aesthetics is what you get in a century-old building space that repurposes different historic structures, but on the other hand, the architects placed the gallery in the only new part of the building, so there should have been much more know-how involved in designing the gallery.

7

And yet, despite all of this, the juxtaposition of beautiful materials and historic layers, which are not only nice to touch and good to look at, but above all fruitful to think of, makes it a splendid building with so many aspects to absorb. I don't think one could single out what makes it so attractive. It escapes your imagination and evaluation, this architecture of paradox.



The Hidden Landmark

Tüüne-Kristin
Vaikla

Tüüne-Kristin Vaikla (b.1961) is a spatial researcher, academic and interior architect who explores the social and artistic dimensions of space. She is the curator of Estonian National Exhibition at the 13th Venice Architecture Biennale and one of the curators of International SISU symposiums.

Enrique Sobejano (b. 1957) and Fuensanta Nieto (b. 1957) are academics and founding partners of Nieto Sobejano Arquitectos which currently operates in Madrid and Berlin. They received the prestigious Alvar Aalto Medal and became an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects in 2015. The Art Centre Córdoba was shortlisted for Mies van der Rohe Award in 2015.

Ra Luhse (b. 1964) is an architect who lives and works in Tallinn. His works include several Estonian cultural objects like Pirita Monastery, Theatrum, Russian Theater in Tallinn, Endla Theater in Pärnu and Concert Hall in Jõhvi.

The freshly built Arvo Part Centre in Laulasmaa, Estonia by Spanish architects Fuensanta Nieto and Enrique Sobejano, has been nominated for the 2019 European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture – the Mies van der Rohe Award^[1].

Photos: Arne Maasik

The architects of the new Arvo Pärt's Centre building are from the Spanish architecture firm Nieto Sobejano Arquitectos, which won the international architectural design competition with their entry *Tabula* in 2014. The construction project was prepared in collaboration with the Estonian architectural office Luhse & Tuhala, and Acoustics by Arau Acustica in collaboration with Linda Madalik. The building covers 2,348 square metres: in addition to a 150-seat chamber hall, archive and employee work spaces, the building features several courtyards, a library, an exhibition area, a video hall, and classrooms. The construction of the new Arvo Pärt Centre was financed by the Estonian government (8.7 million euros)

Part of modern strategic planning is to create hubs that act as magnets. Over the last ten years there have been several international architectural competitions in Estonia in which projects have not been realized. For instance, the ambitious winning entries of Danish architectural bureaus in the competition for a new broadcasting corporation building (Nobel arkitekter, 2007), the architectural competition for the new Estonian Academy of Arts academic building (Effekt arkitekter, 2008), and the competition for Tallinn's new city hall (Bjarke Ingels Group BIG, 2009) have not been built. The architect and historian of architecture Kenneth Frampton has criticised the consideration of buildings as impressive designs or merchandise. He stresses



Photos: Tõnu Tunnel

architecture's social responsibility and the singularity of place in counterbalancing the homogenisation and scenographic touch brought on by globalisation.^[2] Looking back to the last century, he points out the worldwide 'Bilbao effect' where, on the strength of the success of Guggenheim Museum (1995), provincial towns started commissioning design projects from top American architects and over the next decade, the work of star architects increased considerably throughout the world. Iconic buildings sprang up in diametrically different political and cultural contexts.^[3] He mentions the Kiasma Art Museum in Helsinki (Steven Holl, 1998) as one example in which discernible ethnicity – the notion of a public building as a stage for the public – has been overshadowed by extravagance, the desire for originality and neo-neo-avant-gardism.^[4] The Latvian Contemporary Art Museum design project by British star-architect David Adjaye (who is going to design Ghana's Pavilion at the 2019 Venice Art Biennale) has been put to standstill like the previous project by Rem Koolhaas. A similar approach was encountered in Tallinn, where several international architectural competitions were ambitiously held, which shows an inability to adequately distinguish between the actual needs and opportunities that accompany temporal and spatial changes.

Now we have two fresh landmarks as embodiments of national identity: the Estonian National Museum (by Dan Dorell, Lina Ghotmeh, Tsuyoshi Tane, 2016) and the Arvo Pärt Centre (2018). The locations of both buildings – a former military airport landing line and a section of pure pine woods – are somehow hidden, making the journey meaningful by giving the visitor time to relate with the place itself. This kind of



experience is often underestimated. Architect Juhani Pallasmaa defends the sensory and sensual qualities characteristic of architecture and art [...] highlighting the important aspects of the phenomenological cognition of space, such as the time factor, components of sound and silence, light and darkness, which function as the result of combined effect and opposite effect. Architecture articulates time just as it articulates space. He poetically calls 'place a container of the soul, and the soul is a container of place.'^[5]

According to the Nieto Sobejano Arquitectos architects, their fluctuant design of the building (glass, timber and concrete) was inspired by the silence and geometry of Arvo Pärt's music, creating a balance between the modern architectural form and the natural environment.

What happened before the architectural competition?

Ra Luhse: I live in the same woods as Arvo Pärt, so Nora was looking for feedback and reflections from me as an architect about their idea to bring Arvo's archive back to Estonia and build a contemporary centre here, in Laulasmaa. As well as what the next steps could be to generate a high-level international open architectural competition as well as detail planning at the same time. It is not easy to get star architects involved as Estonia itself is still quite an unknown place, so Fujimoto was asked to join the jury^[6].

How many proposals did you receive?

RL: We expected even bigger interest in terms of portfolios. There were around 80 participants, and the split of architectural offices invited to join was

about half international and half Estonian. The Nieto Sobejano team didn't originally have a plan to join, but Arvo Pärt's name drew them in as Enrique is very fond of his music.

That is a good start. Was it easy to make the choice?

RL: Yes, first place being given to Nieto Sobejano Arquitectos was almost by consensus because of the sensitive and natural adaptation they were able to make to the landscape. The main argument was that they managed to solve the tower so incredibly. I am also happy that our KAVAKAVA (an Estonian architecture firm) was in a strong position as well. Arvo and Nora were really satisfied with the jury's decision.

What was the concept of Tabula?

Enrique Sobejano: The nature and landscape of Laulasmaa are at the core of the idea of the Arvo Pärt Centre. The pine forest, as well as the geometries of the plants, inspired the starting point of the formal structure of the project. The initial idea was a continuous building, without corners, without main or secondary facades, pierced by multiple courtyards that connect the landscape with the interior spaces.

RL: Their starting point was certain type of geometry (I like architecture based on geometry). The main idea about the flowing space remained the same but it had to be designed to match the Estonian climate. Their ideas develop through their projects with strong agenda, and they articulate their ideas very strongly to express creative credo and present architectural ideas.



Photo: Arne Maasik



Photo: Arne Maasik

The trees that grew out of the roof?

RL: Yes, this idea helped win this competition, but it was clear that they couldn't stay there. Firstly the living growing trees are just not in the right place, but the forest here was younger, not old trees like you see on the seashore.

How many pine trees had to be cut during the construction work?

ES: Some pines had to be cut due to building; more than we would have liked, but comparatively few in number. It was decided by the Pärt family that the moss of the surrounding forest would be recovered in the courtyards instead of replanting the pines.

Was the first construction procurement too high?

RL: Our market is so small and this is quite a cobweb. The project is very unique and the idea of a glass pavilion was quite expensive, so we had to come back to earth – all decisions were made by Fuensanta Nieto and Enrique Sobejano.

ES: The main change during the design and construction process consisted in reducing the number of patios, and adapting to the specific requirements of the program of uses.

Did you have to reduce the size?

RL: Michael Pärt folded the paper twice (laughing). No, we did not reduce the size of the building, only a bit of the façade glass and constructive

technical solutions (for example the ventilation hidden under the floor was very elegant).

What about this building is sacral, does it contain sacral elements?

ES: In the competition brief there were two unusual elements: a tower to climb over the pines and see the sea, and a small chapel. Being two unexpected spaces, we thought that they could possibly symbolize the underlying concept of the project: the tower represents the will of architecture to rise towards the sky, overcoming gravity, while on the other hand the chapel expresses the desire to anchor architecture to a place, to the earth.

RL: Yes, the chapel is featured and surrounded by the building, while the tower, which is a separate artefact, provides a view to the sea and over the peninsula. The sacral character has been beautifully transferred here. The chapel, in a Greek-Roman style, was one Arvo and Nora Pärt's wishes. It is an organic part of the complex, the architects' wish was that it would be built here on the site.

Public or private space – which one is dominant in this building?

ES: There is a gradation of the public to the private, although the public character undoubtedly dominates: a visitor can walk without hierarchy through most of the space. The large folded zinc roof varies in height: the higher spaces correspond to the more public areas of the building whereas the lower rooms for the offices and staff become more domestic.

How did Arvo Pärt relate within the working process, how much was he present?

RL: He was always there. And the architects of the building were in complete dialogue with him. Afterwards Arvo started a dialogue with the builders, asking them not to hurry.

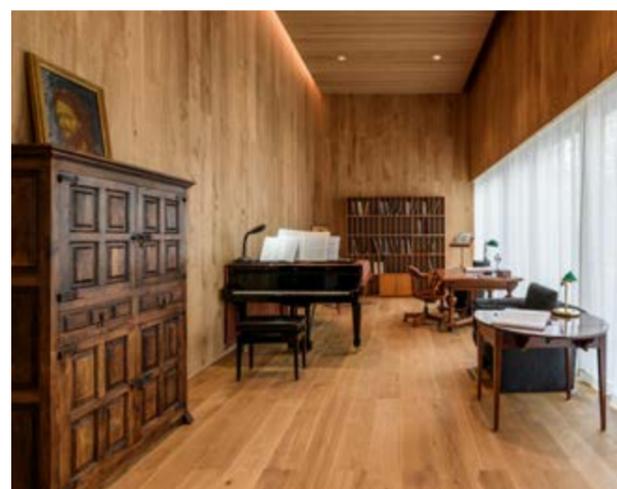


Photo: Tõnu Tunnel

Is Arvo Pärt a good client?

RL: I am sure one couldn't imagine better. He is extremely demanding, but also reflective, which is very important to the architects.

Was he interested in the physical form of the architecture?

RL: He was interested, it became his own. This part of the process. Did he just imagine this house like that – I have not dared to ask him. The Centre is for inspiration, to follow his tempo. The first center for a living composer is for Krzysztof Penderecki in Poland.

Yes, people working here in Laulasmaa have described how Arvo comes and makes (sometimes) small change in his notes/manuscripts which causes lots of work to follow and archive his steps. It is the charm and pain of 'living architecture'.

What about the neighborhood and infrastructure here in Laulasmaa – is it enough?

ES: We think it is preferable that the infrastructure and the neighborhood maintain the existing smaller scale. The Arvo Pärt Centre is not and should not be, in our opinion, an institution for masses of people: it represents the serene and silent spirit of the composer's work.

RL: This is a challenge. The Lohusalu Peninsula can become overloaded – this summer will show how it will work. We have realized this to be a problem here in nature. But we have started communicating with local authorities (the centre is in a former military town, Paldiski). There is a high cultural landscape in the local context starting with Eller, Klas, Kaljuste, Reimann, and Keres, etc., which have inspired creativity. The Arvo Pärt Centre is a perfect starting point to link and add value to the area as a whole.

And what has inspired your project – music, literature, architecture?

ES: The work of Arvo Pärt, particularly the concepts of variations on a theme, the mirror in the mirror, his *Spiegel im Spiegel* and *Tabula Rasa*. As well as literature – the idea of one story inside another, the narrations of Jorge Luis Borges on infinite spaces. And architecture – the buildings of Alvar Aalto integrated in the landscape.

How do you work as a duo?

ES: Initially, the beginnings of projects are very personal, they arise from an idea that governs the whole process, after a dialogue between the two of us and a reduced number of close collaborators. Later, when the project and the construction are subsequently developed, the process becomes a more extensive and specialized teamwork.

For you, is the building like a home – an archive – a concert hall – or a museum?

ES: It can not be described by a single word: it is all at the same time, although perhaps the most inclusive term and the one we prefer is: a home.

There here one special room furnished with what the family brought with them from their home in West-Berlin (1981–2005).

RL: Yes, I think this is a much bigger space than the family had in Berlin.. This is a private space. Arvo loves to be there and work.

Is the chapel's interior covered with fresco finished*?

RL: I don't know (laughing).

"In gentle curves the building gravitates around different places that only gradually draw attention as one starts to move and explore. The architecture constantly mediates between yourself and the nature around it. Places become defined as they receive their shape through the patio's around them. They are as a constant invitation to slow down and disappear into music. Through their rhythm, they play with time and memory. I was ever so lucky as to listen to the Vox Clamantis choir in the music hall. The choir surrounded by us listening, soft light, natural wood and gentle colors, the view on the trees. Then wandering off through some library shelves, wanting to stay and read. Only after a while one notices the chapel in one of the patio's, secluded and almost shy but the heart of the building."

— Caroline Voet, professor at the KU Leuven School of Architecture, Belgium

[1] Estonia has been shortlisted for Mies van der Rohe award in 2009 with the Rotermann Carpenter's Workshop (KOKO).
 [2] K. Frampton, *Towards Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance*, 1983. – *Postmodern Culture*. Ed. H. Foster. London: Pluto Press, pp. 16–30.
 [3] K. Frampton, *Moodne arhitektuur: kriitiline ajalugu [1980]*. Trans. I. Ruudi, E. Närepea. Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2011, p. 361.
 [4] K. Frampton, *Hommage á Finlandia: Finnish Architecture and the Unfinished Modern Project*. Lecture at the Museum of Estonian Architecture, 14 October 2015 (author's notes).
 [5] T.-K. Vaikla, *Repurposing Space: the Role and Potential of Spatial Intervention*. Tallinn: Estonian Academy of Arts, 2017, p 50.
 [6] The jury members: Michael Pärt, Sou Fujimoto, Madis Kolk, Peeter Pere, Ra Luhse, Peep Jänes, Kadri Tilleman.

*The author of the wall paintings is the icon painter, deacon Nikita Andrejev.

Space and Time Machine –

NART: Narva Art Residency

Ann Mirjam Vaikla (b. 1990) is the director of Narva Art Residency, which focuses on community building in the border city of Narva through a creative interaction of arts, architecture and education. She has a background in scenography and performing arts.

This essay is a poetic résumé of Narva Art Residency, since its founding in 2015 along with a focus on the present years (2018–2019). It elaborates on perceiving a residency as a ‘tool’ rather than a mere physical unit that simply provides living and working space for its residents.

Photo: Tõnu Tunnel



Photos: Jacques-Henri Heim

Narva Art Residency's peculiar existence starts with its location, which is essentially the border entrance between Estonia and Russia that also serves as an entry/exit point for European Union. After Tõnis Saadoja's solo exhibition in 2014, "Architectural Photography With a Small Boy", at the John Carr historicist villa in Kreenholm quarter in Narva, an art residency was founded a year later. It functions in cooperation between three major institutions: The Estonian Academy of Arts, Narva Gate, and the Estonian Ministry of Culture – "a one-eye kid" as a known curator once said referring to the residency's complex structure – or inversely, a very lucky one resulting in a unique spatial and financial possibilities that allow a certain type of sustainability.

Since its beginning NART has exhibited a solo exhibition of a well known Estonian artist every year, including Tõnis Saadoja, Laurentsius, Maria Kapajeva and Paul Kuimet. At the core of the institution lays a residency programme that has brought artists from across the world to Narva. Each resident is encouraged to find a meeting point with the citizens – an open studio, workshop or lecture – it serves a mission to create a dialogue between different communities through arts and culture. Despite the fact that the residency is situated in the third biggest city in Estonia, it is positioned in between of rural and urban context. Kreenholm district with a severe, vacant textile factory at its heart, remains still and cut off from the rest of the city. The local Russian speaking community is considered rather closed and tranquil, which will prepare a resident for a creative period of silence and solitude.

Residency = Tool

"I love the idea that time has a shape and we just have to learn to see it. ... First, I feel a timeline and I'm at the end of this line – in an uncomfortable position in a way. But then, I see so many things – things from the past – and I'm part of it all, so much so that the feeling of time as a line dissolves; it's all one, all presence."

— Peter Zumthor^[1]

Regardless that each residency is strongly connected with its particular spatial embodiment (historical building, a city, geographical / political location, significant landscape) and context, it is intriguing to consider

and to see it as a "tool". If "time travel" is a widely-recognized concept of movement between certain points in time, analogous to movement between different points in space by an object or a person^[2], a residency can literally do the same. It is often used to separate oneself from the society in order to focus on artistic practices, but contrastingly it can be a shortcut to reaching certain communities and individuals.

2018 – Residency as a Tool to Travel in Time

One of the key events of the 2018 programme was the newly founded platform: Narva Urban Lab, which acted as a micro city festival that brought together internationally known professionals and the local community with an interest and experience in analyzing and developing cityscapes, public spaces and built environments. A symposium: "Narva-Detroit: Post Industrial Cities on the Border – Where to?" took place in the centre of it all, and invited speakers included those from Narva and Detroit, as well as Tallinn, Tartu, Helsinki and Riga. Speakers discussed the potential and challenges of postindustrial border cities, the role of artistic and urban practices when re-envisioning a city, shrinking urban spaces – the possibilities to adapt these spaces with occurring changes, and the role of community initiatives.





Keynote speaker, Francesca Berardi, a researcher and a journalist dedicated to researching the different stories connected to cities, and the author of “Detour in Detroit”^[3] underlined the importance of a ‘multiplicity of narratives’ in a city. It came as a reaction to frequent slogans #narvaisnext that she saw in the city – a movement promoting Narva’s candidacy for the next European Capital of Culture in 2024. ‘Multiplicity of narratives’ stands for an understanding of a city that has different faces, various stories, initiatives and expressions. For several summer days, Narva Art Residency became a tool to build a global connection in time and space, between Narva and Detroit and to experience what is behind an ordinary understanding of a simple narrative: past – present – future. It became a tool to multiply narratives, to allow timelessness and to move back and forth, but also up and down on the line while asking the question ‘Where to?’. Perhaps the question is even more relevant today, half a year later when it is clear that Narva is not able to run for the title any longer.

2019 – Residency as a Tool to Travel in Space

The year 2018 ended with Dutch artist Katja Mater’s film installation “As Much Time As Space”^[4] as part of the annual exhibition “Five Volumes” by Paul Kuimet^[5]



Photos: Tõnu Tunnel



Narva Urban Lab, 2018. Photo: Johan Huimerind

(curator Nico Anklam). As a metaphor, one can consider it as a tool providing a surreal time experience consisting of one film, projected by two projectors, using the time it takes for the pellicule to travel from one projector to the other — 8 seconds, as a framework for the film. The film was shot inside the house of the modernist artist couple Theo and Nelly van Doesburg and combines architectural details of the house with Mater’s own drawings. Projected as a split screen, we look at a play between past and present that every once in a while merge to form a new reality.

Described artwork acted as an interlude paving the way to 2019, which carries the title “(Re)configuring Territories”. The theme will be investigated during the second Narva Urban Lab on May 11th following a spring school curated by the Helsinki based design collective Trojan Horse^[6]. The theme has a focus on the “border” aspect: political borders, social borders, cultural borders. What kind of borders do we notice? Is a border something that separates or connects us?

Secondly it will reveal its “reconfiguration” through an annual exhibition: “Emotive Masterplanning” by the architects Juliane Schwarz and Riin-Kärt Ranne. The emotional masterplan follows the site-specific characteristics and historical character of the city in contrast to previous top-down planning

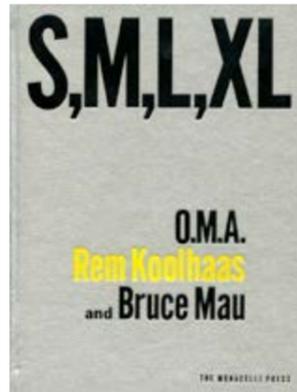
as we know from the present Narva. In line with Zumthor’s idea that *time has a shape and we need to learn to see it*, the authors are posing a series of motifs that are composed of typical building stock, found structures, and existing landscape spaces.

The Narva Art Residency is like a microcosm of Narva city – one mirrors another. Walking through the spaces different time periods – *volumes of time* – can be experienced. There are rooms that are newly repaired and others that reveal preliminary bricks from over a century ago. It is a machine that allows constant travelling but also rebuilds, and therefore identifies itself again after each intercourse.

[1] P. Zumthor, M. Lending, A Feeling of History – Scheidegger & Spiess, 2018, p 39–40
 [2] Time travel – Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_travel
 [3] F. Berardi, A. Rovaldi, Detour in Detroit – Humboldt Books, 2015, <http://detourindetroit.com/>
 [4] K. Mater, As Much Time As Space – 2017, <http://www.katjamater.com/recent/?res=800>
 [5] P. Kuimet, Five Volumes – Tique Art Paper, 2018, <https://www.tique.art/paper/exhibitions/paul-kuimet-five-volumes/>
 [6] K. Karvinen, T. Vasko, Trojan Horse – <https://trojanhorse.fi>

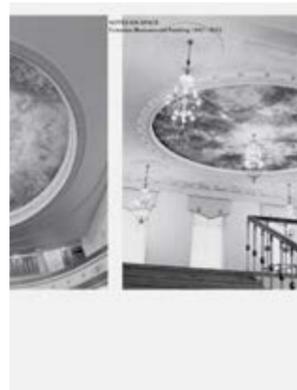
I am an art historian and devoted fan of modern architecture, I have worked as a director of the Museum of Estonian Architecture for the last five years. I must admit, my bookshelves are quite thematic; so I selected some important thinkers and must-read books from the field of contemporary architecture, architectural history of Tallinn, and a couple of novels I have read (or recently re-read) that trigger one's imagination as powerful source of rich architectural landscapes.

Writing about architecture is like writing about everything else – you have to come up with a good story.



S,M,L,XL. O.M.A. (1995)
Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau

The cult book of architecture. Still a valid and extremely enjoyable piece of reading for all who want to understand the complex and contradictory world of contemporary architecture. All that is solid has melted into the hypermodernist flow of information, no mercy.



Notes on Space. Tõnis Saadoja's Ceiling Painting in Theatre NO99. Estonian Monumental Painting 1879-2012 (2012)
Edited by Tõnis Saadoja, Paul Kuimet, Gregor Taul, Aliina Astrova, Eero Epner, Indrek Sirkel

Although Theatre NO99 ceased to exist, the ceiling painting in their building – by Tõnis Saadoja – is one of the most beautiful artistic interventions they initiated, and this exhaustive book that covers the survived monumental paintings in Estonia came along with it. A nostalgic trip to forgotten interiors and a manifesto of the synthesis of arts.



SOS Brutalism. A Global Survey (2017)
Edited by Oliver Elser, Philip Kurz, Peter Cachola Schmal

One of the most recent of many publications riding on the current wave of popularity of the post-war monumental and brutal concrete architecture. Arguably the first-ever global survey of this kind of architecture, good photography from the bold angles add the drama to the story.



The Concise Dictionary of Modern Architecture: Photographs 1974-1986 (1995)
Jüri Okas

A visual essay presenting the weird, unconventional architectural objects found and photographed during walks. The photos eternalise everyday objects and small architecture that usually remain unnoticed. With the book, the scale, composition, and formal language, elevates the objects beyond average architecture, postmodern sensibility and a conceptual mind.



A User's Guide to Tallinn (2002)
Edited by Mari Laanemets, Andres Kurg

This small and witty guide to Tallinn is a collection of personal stories that cover different aspects of city life: the history of urban districts, landmark buildings, personal memories, fictional tours for tourists, small snapshots, colourful descriptions of bars, underground culture, graffiti, skaters, punks, street signs and much more.



Less is Enough: On Architecture and Asceticism (2013)
Pier Vittorio Aureli

One of the most original thinkers in contemporary architectural theory, this text digs to the roots of modern aesthetics and accuses late capitalism of making a profit out of utterly aestheticised asceticism that have been left devoid of its true meaning. Is it still possible to reprise the idea of "less" as a radical alternative?



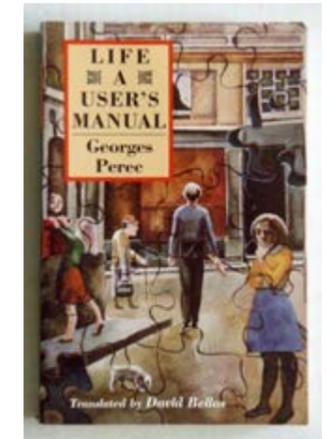
Wooden Architecture of Tallinn (2014)
Edited By Leele Välja

A richly illustrated book with exhaustive articles on the unique historical phenomena of Tallinn – the well-preserved wooden architecture of Kalamaja, Pelgulinn, Kadriorg, and many other districts, once associated with degradation and decay. Views of the now perished slums provide contrast to the contemporary houses, and freshly restored buildings indicate the potential not yet realised in many others.



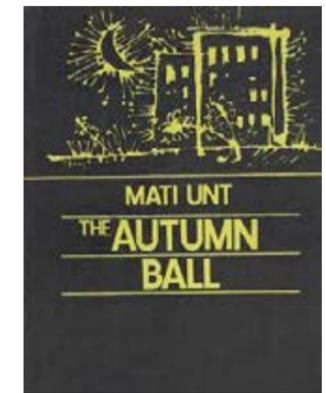
Norwegian wood (1989)
Haruki Murakami

Murakami has the unique skill of being able to create sensitive images of a large variety of living environments, dense urban landscapes full of smells, haste, and flows of people and food. Literature is one of the most powerful ways to trigger our imagination, and to envision possible architectural spaces.



Life: A User's Manual (1987)
Georges Perec

This text not only describes the concrete architectural space in the most exhaustive way, but it is also structured as an architectural system. It is a text done as a maze, from which only the author knows the way out. A parisian townhouse as a unique Tower of Babel, as it could be seen if the entire facade were removed to expose everything inside.



The Autumn Ball: Scenes of City Life (1985)
Mati Unt

Another definitive cult piece. First published in 1979, it is one of the most well-known manifestations of modern urban life and standardized architecture in Estonian literature. The novel is remarkable for its style, as it combines sensitively observed details of late Soviet everyday life in the modern neighbourhood of Mustamäe with (mock) erudition, urban folklore, and apocalyptic intimations.

Exhibitions

Adamson-Eric Museum

Lühike jalg 3, Tallinn

May – Sept: Tue – Sun 11am – 6pm

Oct – Apr: Wed – Sun 11am – 6pm

adamson-eric.ekm.ee

Permanent Exhibition:

Adamson-Eric (1902 – 1968)

05.04.19 – 04.08.19 On the Stage and on the Canvas

16.08.19 – 01.12.19 The Visit: Eero Järnefelt and Venny Soldan-Brofeldt

13.12.19 – 01.03.20 The Transition: Siim-Tanel

Annus – Performance and Pictures

Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia

Põhja 35, Tallinn

Apr – Dec: Tue – Sun 12pm – 7pm

ekkm.ee

27.04.19 – 16.06.19 False Vacationer. Sigrid Viir

13.07.19 – 25.08.19 XENOS. Vito Acconci, Kader Attia, Dénes Farkas, Kalle Hamm & Dzamil

Kamanger, Marco Laimre, Tanja Muravskaja, Ingo Niermann & Alexa Karolinski, Ho Tzu Nyen, Bita Razavi, Ene-Liis Semper & Kiwa, Félix González-Torres

07.09.19 – 20.10.19 When you say we Belong to the Light we Belong to the Thunder. Curator Heidi Ballet

02.11.19 – 15.12.19 Tunnel (working title).

Curators Marika Agu, Maria Arusoo, Kaarin Kivirähk, Sten Ojavee

Draakon Gallery

Pikk 18, Tallinn

Mon – Fri 11am – 6pm, Sat 11am – 5pm

eaa.ee/draakon

29.04.19 – 18.05.19 Cloe Jancis

20.05.19 – 08.06.19 Hedi Jaansoo

10.06.19 – 06.07.19 Jaan Elken

08.07.19 – 03.08.19 Mariliis Kenkmaa, Tõnis

Kenkmaa

05.08.19 – 31.08.19 Margus Tõnnov

02.09.19 – 21.09.19 Anna Mari Liivrand

23.09.19 – 12.10.19 Art Allmägi

14.10.19 – 02.11.19 Tõnis Saadoja

04.11.19 – 23.11.19 Karel Koplimets & Maido Juss

25.11.19 – 14.12.19 Mari Roosvalt

16.12.19 – 11.01.20 Jass Kaselaan

Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design

Lai 17, Tallinn

Wed – Sun 11am – 6pm

etdm.ee

23.03.19 – 02.06.19 What Keeps Me. Estonian Ceramist Association. Curator Pille Kaleviste

17.05.19 – 01.09.19 Translating Art. 80

publications by Lugemik

14.09.19 – 1.12.19 ROOM. Krista Leesi

28.09.19 – 5.01.20 The Weather Diaries.

Curators Cooper & Gorfer

Hobusepea Gallery

Hobusepea 2, Tallinn

Wed – Mon 11am – 6pm

eaa.ee/hobusepea

03.05.19 – 20.05.19 Mihkel Maripuu

22.05.19 – 10.06.19 Anna Kaarma

12.06.19 – 08.07.19 Jaan Elken

10.07.19 – 05.08.19 Kristina Paabus (USA/Est)

07.08.19 – 02.09.19 Madlen Hirtentreu, Eva

Mustonen, Jenny Grönholm

04.09.19 – 23.09.19 Laura Pöld, Katrin Väli

25.09.19 – 14.10.19 Maarja Nurk

16.10.19 – 04.11.19 Silvia Sosar, Hanno Soans

06.11.19 – 25.11.19 Angela Maasalu

27.11.19 – 16.12.19 Johannes Luik, LAURI

18.12.19 – 13.01.20 Helena Keskküla

Haapsalu City Gallery

Posti 3, Haapsalu

Wed – Sat 12pm – 6pm

galerii.kultuurimaja.ee

May – EAA painting department

June – Isikupära

July – Urmas Pedanik

August – ECWS watercolor exhibition & symposium

September – Tiiu Randmann

October – Merike Estru

November – Imbi Kruuv

December – Kristi Kongi

Kadriorg Art Museum

Weizenbergi 37, Tallinn

May – Sept: Tue, Thu – Sun 10am – 6pm,

Wed 10am – 8pm

kadriorumuseum.ekm.ee

Permanent Exhibition: Paintings from the 16th – 18th centuries. Dutch, German, Italian and Russian masters. Western European and Russian applied art and sculpture from the 18th – 20th centuries.

07.12.18 – 26.05.19 In the Beginning There Were ... Köler and Weizenberg

16.06.19 – 13.10.19 Dannebrog – The Flag That

Fell from the Sky: The Golden Age of Danish Art

02.11.19 – 05.04.20 *Ars Academica*: The University of Tartu Art Collection

Kogo Gallery

Kastani 42, Tartu

Wed – Fri 12pm – 7pm, Sat 12pm – 6pm

kogogallery.ee

04.04.19 – 11.05.19 Sailin’ on the Red Sea.

Ede Raadik

Kumu Art Museum

Weizenbergi 34 / Vaele 1

Tue – Wed 10am – 6pm, Thu 10am – 8pm,

Fri – Sun 10am – 6pm

kumu.ekm.ee

Permanent exhibition: Treasury.

Classics of Estonian Art from the Beginning of the 18th Century until the End of the Second World War.

Permanent exhibition: Conflicts and Adaptations. Estonian Art of the Soviet Era (1940–1991)

Estonian Art from the End of the Second World War Until Re-Independence.

19.12.18 – 12.05.19 The Project Space. Well known, but still unknown Estonian Printmaker

Agathe Veeber (1901–1988)

22.02.19 – 08.06.19 Gordon Matta-Clark: Anarchitect. Anu Vahtra: Completion through removal

15.03.19 – 04.08.19 *Sots Art* and Fashion:

Conceptual Clothes from Eastern Europe

12.04.19 – 25.08.19 Gustav Klucis: Russian

Avant-Garde Art in the 1920s–1930s

03.05.19 – 15.09.19 Tommy Cash / Rick Owens

17.05.19 – 27.10.19 Garden Exile: The Tuglases’

Home Garden Through Tanja Muravskaja’s Camera Lens

05.07.19 – 10.11.19 Art Museum of Estonia 100.

Open Collections: The Artist Takes the Floor

23.08.19 – 05.01.20 Estonian Legend in Paris:

Maire Männik

20.09.19 – 19.01.20 The Conqueror’s Eye: Lisa Reihana’s *In Pursuit of Venus*

06.12.19 – 15.03.20 Art Museum of Estonia 100.

Creating the Self: Emancipating Women in Estonian and Finnish Art

11.10.19 – 12.04.20 Edith Karlson, Mary Reid

Kelley and Eva Mustonen

01.11.19 – 26.04.20 Silvia Jõgever and Kadi

Estland

Mikkel Museum

Weizenbergi 28, Tallinn

Tue, Thu – Sun 10am – 6pm, Wed 10am – 8pm

mikkelimuuseum.ekm.ee

Permanent exhibition: Collection of

Johannes Mikkel: the Art of Western

Europe, Russia, and China from the 16th

to the 20th centuries.

23.03.19 – 11.08.19 Pirosmani: The World of a

Lonely Genius

31.08.19 – 19.01.20 Collector with a Mission:

Alfred Rõude

Museum of Estonian Architecture

Rotermann Salt Storage

Ahtri 2, Tallinn

Wed – Fri 11am – 6pm, Sat – Sun 10am – 6pm

arhitektuurimuuseum.ee

Permanent exhibition: Space in Motion:

A Century of Estonian Architecture

26.01.19 – 19.05.19 A Room of One’s Own.

Feminist’s Questions to Architecture

18.04.19 – 09.06.19 Woodland Sweden

Niguliste Museum

Niguliste 3, Tallinn

May – Sept: Mon – Sun 10am – 6pm

Oct – Apr: Wed – Sun 10am – 5pm

nigulistemuuseum.ekm.ee

Permanent Exhibition: The Art Museum of Estonia’s collection of medieval and early modern ecclesiastical art

19.10.18 – 12.08.19 The Power of Things

25.10.19 – 26.04.20 The Virgin Mary: Woman,

Mother, Queen

Tallinn Art Hall

Vabaduse väljak 8, Tallinn

Wed – Sun 12pm – 7pm

kunstihoone.ee

27.04.19 – 09.06.19 Spring Exhibition

22.06.19 – 01.09.19 The Art of Being Good.

Curator Siim Preiman

14.09.19 – 17.11.19 Mercury. Tallinn Photomonth 2019

27.11.19 – 30.11.19 Evelyn Raudsepp’s curatorial project

14.12.19 – 01.03.20 Disarming Language:

disability, communication, rupture. Curators

Christine Sun Kim and Niels Van Tomme

Art Hall Gallery

Vabaduse väljak 6, Tallinn

Wed – Sun 12pm – 7pm

kunstihoone.ee

27.04.19 – 09.06.19 Spring Exhibition

20.06.19 – 11.08.19 Britta Benno. Dystopic

Tallinn

16.08.19 – 13.10.19 Kate Lyddon and Angela

Maasalu. The Maiden, the Mother, and the

Crone

18.10.19 – 15.12.19 Vello Vinn. ∞ &

20.12.10 – 16.02.20 Mall Paris and Edith

Karlson. Sisters

Tallinn City Gallery

Harju 13, Tallinn

Wed – Sun 12pm – 7pm

kunstihoone.ee

27.04.19 – 09.06.19 Spring Exhibition

14.06.19 – 18.08.19 A Situation. Curator

Andreas Nilsson

23.08.19 – 20.10.19 Jüri Arrak. Green Light

25.10.19 – 15.12.19 Jane Remm. Views on

a Landscape

20.12.19 – 16.02.20 Edgar Tedresaar and

Sten Saarits

Tartu Art House

Vanemuise 26, Tartu

Wed – Mon 12pm – 6pm

kunstimaja.ee

Big Hall

11.04.19 – 05.05.19 Rooms of Light.

Johanna Ilvessalo, Saija Koponen, Anne Tompuri,

09.05.19 – 09.06.19 Heikki Leis

27.06.19 – 21.07.19 Madara Lazdiņa (Latvia)

25.07.19 – 18.08.19 Printmaking Festival.

22.08.19 – 15.09.19 Ehalill Halliste,

Helle Videvik

19.09.19 – 13.10.19 Dark Matter. Printmaking

group exhibition.

17.10.19 – 10.11.19 Helle Vahersalu 80

14.11.19 – 15.12.19 Marco Laimre

19.12.19 – 12.01.20 Annual exhibition

Small Hall

11.04.19 – 05.05.19 Meiu Münt

09.05.19 – 09.06.19 Olesya Kachanovskaya

27.06.19 – 21.07.19 Jane Remm, Jaanus Remm

25.07.19 – 18.08.19 Heldur Viires’ graphic design

22.08.19 – 15.09.19 Andra Jõgis, Aleksandra Pavlenkova, Kristiina Oppi

19.09.19 – 13.10.19 Andrus Peegel, Tõnis Kriisa

17.10.19 – 10.11.19 Jass Kaselaan

14.11.19 – 15.12.19 Kairo

19.12.19 – 12.01.20 Annual exhibition

Monument Gallery

11.04.19 – 05.05.19 Tiina Sarapu

09.05.19 – 09.06.19 Marko Mäetamm in

collaboration with Tartu Artist in Residence program

27.06.19 – 21.07.19 Johannes Luik, Jaan Luik

25.07.19 – 18.08.19 Taavi Oolberg

22.08.19 – 15.09.19 Katrin Koskaru

19.09.19 – 13.10.19 Pille Johanson

17.10.19 – 10.11.19 Mari-Leen Kiipli

14.11.19 – 15.12.19 Taavi Suisalu

19.12.19 – 12.01.20 Annual exhibition

Tartu Art Museum

Raekoja Square 18, Tartu

Wed, Fri – Sun 11am – 6pm,

Thu 11am – 8pm

tartmus.ee

05.04.19 – 05.05.19 The World of Muses.

Curated by the Tartu Art Museum’s Youth Club

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*When You Say We Belong To The Light
We Belong To The Thunder*
Curated by Heidi Ballet
7.09–20.10.2019
Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia

Mercury
Curated by Post Brothers
with Simon Dybbroe Møller
14.09–17.11.2019
Tallinn Art Hall

*Let the field of your attention...
soften and spread out*
Curated by Hanna Laura Kaljo
21.09–1.12.2019
Kai Art Center

FILM PROGRAMME
Curated by Ingel Vaikla
25.09–16.10.2019
Sõprus cinema

PROFESSIONAL WEEK
24.–29.09.2019
Various locations in Tallinn

ART FAIR FOTO TALLINN
27.–29.09.2019
Noblessner port

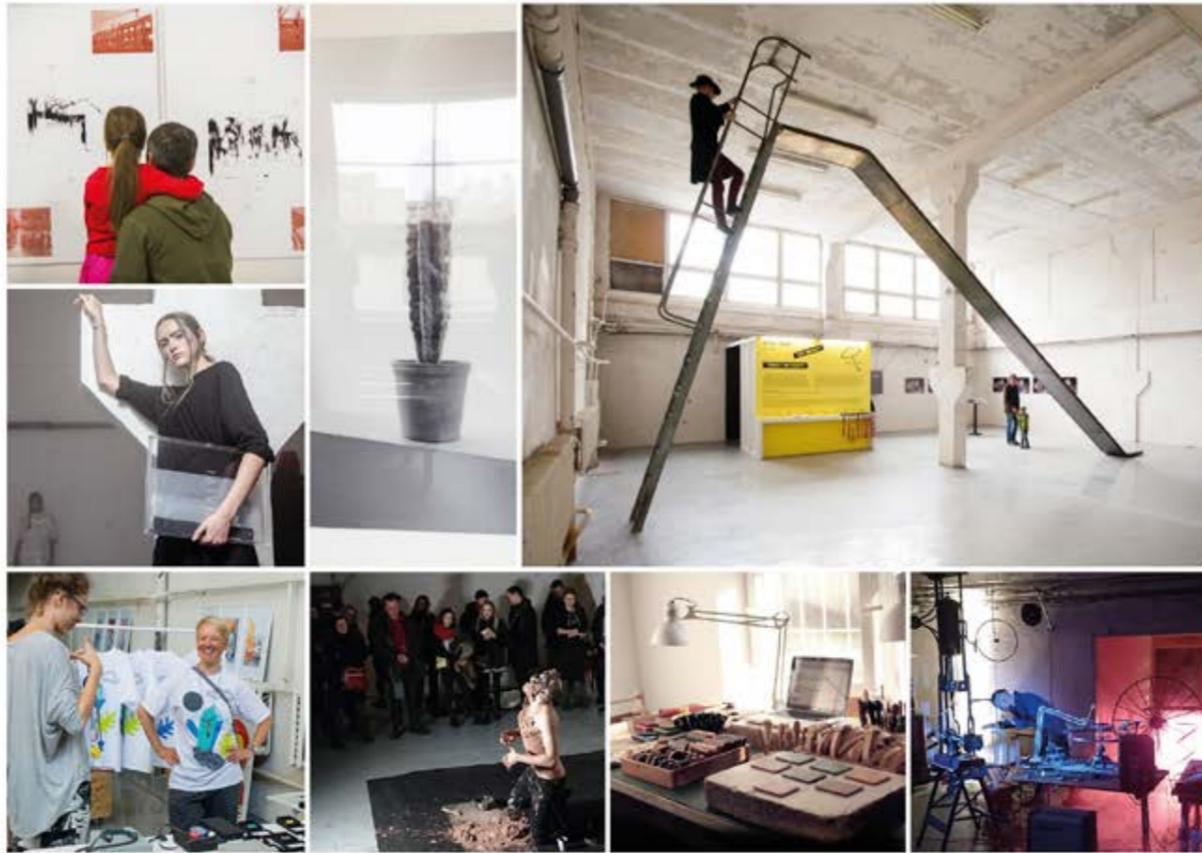
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ON CONTEMPORARY ART FROM THE BALTICS



FOTOKUU.EE

www.echogonewrong.com



Up left: Exhibition "The (In)visible dreams and streams", photo: Teige Lepp /
 Top: Take "Seetona cornice", photo: Endel Aasalon /
 LNW performative fashion installation "When I Was a Girl & Life Was Yet Ahead", photo: Alan Proosa /
 Performance Aio Valle, photo: Indrek Koester /
 Taimin Culture Night 2016, photo: Sven Tujits /
 Erika Group, photo: Robert Laursoo, photo: Vavvra & Mar /
 Erik Aialooga concert performance "The loud, the rough and ugly", photo: Indrek Koester

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Iiu Susiraja
 Flirting with the Toilet
 Seat Cover, 2018



**“There is no art without art criticism and vice versa.
And there's no art criticism without the history of art and vice versa.
So it's a very complicated and multi-layered discourse,
and it has been like that, well, since the renaissance at least.
– Andreas Trossek, editor-in-charge of an Estonian art quarterly
KUNST.EE (published since, well, 1958 at least)**

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An exhibition organised by the Bronx Museum of the Arts in cooperation with the Art Museum of Estonia

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E-mail: estinst@estinst.ee
Phone: (+372) 631 4355

Editorial Board
Triin Ojari, Marten Esko, Katrin Maiste, Kaarin Kivirahk,
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